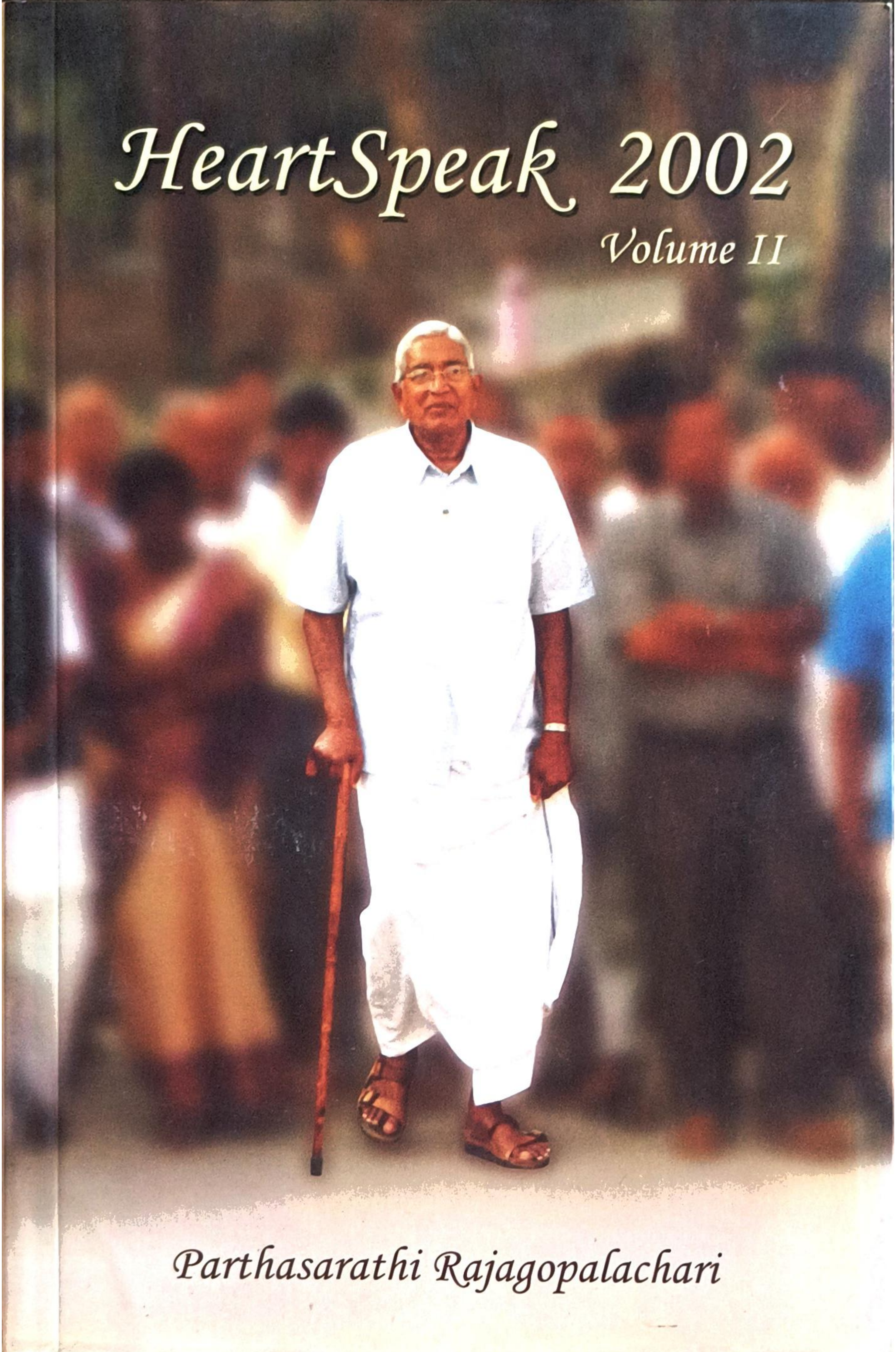
HeartSpeak 2002

Volume II



Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari

HeartSpeak 2002

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SHRI RAM CHANDRA MISSION
Manapakkam, Chennai – 600 125, India

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1

Here and Now

Dear brothers and sisters,

All of you know that today we have perhaps the largest assembly of abhyasis ever in the history of this Mission since 1945. [Applause] It is an indication of the direction in which humanity is proceeding, in which you are all proceeding; that your craving for spiritual evolution, that your desire, ardent desire to follow the spiritual path, that you know where it is to be had, how it is to be had – these are what have brought you all here. Birthdays come and go. Guru Poornimas come and go. In fact, even gods come and go. *Kitne hari aaye gaye* [Many gods have come and gone] says also – I think it was Kabir. And the Gita says, everybody from Brahma and all, they all have to come down to this *karma bhoomi* [field of action] again.

We call it karma bhoomi. In literature it is called *mrityuloka* [mortal world]. This is the only *loka* [world]

Guru Poornima and the Master's 75th Birth Anniversary,
24 July 2002, Chennai, India

where there is life and death. In no other world in this universe is death a phenomenon of existence. It is precisely to get out of that stranglehold of death that we follow the spiritual way. And that in its wisdom the soul, before it is reborn as a human being (for which I believe many crores of lives have to be taken) – in that wisdom before birth, the soul evaluates its own life, its need in the future rebirth, and selects what it will be born as, where, how, et cetera. Everything is predetermined by the soul, not by some god sitting somewhere in heaven. We decide our destiny before birth and, unfortunately, regrettably, most of us spoil it because the moment we descend to this world, desires envelop us, desires take us in their grip, and we lose sight of the spiritual goal and run after materialistic goals, after power, after money, after influence. Therefore, this *chakkar* [cycle], *janana marana* [life and death] chakkar.

Now when I joined the Mission I had little idea of what I was letting myself in for. In a sense it was an accident. But blessed be such accidents which lead us towards the goal, which lead us to the holy feet of such a great master who can, as he himself told me several times, with the blink of an eye release us from the world, release us from these mortal coils, release us from the bondage to samskaras – an opportunity hardly given to human beings.

Shankaracharya has said that it is a great virtue to be born as a human being. Human life is not everybody's. You see how many insects, how many millions of creatures are here? So many species, so many classes, so many orders; and they have all to evolve. Only the human being has, unfortunately or fortunately depending on how you think, been given the privilege of deciding about his own evolution. And there we make the mistake; there perhaps God made the mistake. It is a divine mistake. He thought human beings would be wise enough to follow His will, to follow His wishes, to follow His goal, to go behind Him as children of their great Father, the *parampitaa* [the eternal Father].

But as all children, or most children do, here we have our own will that we exercise. We say, "God – well, he is eternal. *Kya jaldi hai? Is janm mein nahin to agle janm.* [What is the hurry? If not in this life, then in the next life.] What is so wonderful about liberation? I am very well off. I am a multi-millionaire. I am happy. I have a beautiful wife, I have three cars, et cetera, et cetera," – the whole bag of tricks. God waits. He can, because He is Master of eternity. In a sense He doesn't have to wait because there is no time in eternity – He *is*. Inexorably we have to go. When? Depends on us.

So you see, I would urge upon you the necessity of making up your minds that, what must be achievable as a spiritual goal must be achieved now rather than later, today rather than tomorrow, here rather than elsewhere. 'Here and now' – it should be the slogan.

So this is the spiritual message that I have to convey: that you, in your wisdom as an unborn soul, decided upon your circumstances of birth on this world. You, in your foolishness after birth, *bhatkaoed* [led astray] in the famous Hindi term, by desires, ambitions, have in a sense deviated, strayed, if not lost the idea of that goal. Gurus come only to remind us, "Son, daughter, wake up! Where are you going? Is this what you wanted? Is this what you should want? Remember!"

So we are jogged into awareness, into remembrance of what we are, why we came here, and given a gentle nudge into following that path. The guru does nothing else. All this glorification of the guru – good, [but] what we should do by ourselves, a guru comes to *remind* us. Therefore, we have this word 'remembrance' in spirituality, especially in Sahaj Marg. Remember. Remember him. In remembering him, remember yourself, remember your relationship with him. You are not to go groveling on your knees like a penitent. Go with your head held high and say, "Dad, I am come home." This is the simple message of spirituality.

My master had his own master, our revered Lalaji Maharaj, in whose time there was no organisation. This Shri Ram Chandra Mission was created in 1945, registered under the Societies Registration Act of Uttar Pradesh, 1860. And we have our headquarters in Uttar Pradesh and our centres and branches all over the world. As you just heard our respected brother Shri Sanjay Lalbhai tell you, seventy-four or seventy-five countries have Sahaj Marg in them. Today you have witnessed weddings between abhyasis in Iran, abhyasis in Belarus, Tamilian marrying a Hindi speaking person, Andhra fellow marrying somebody from the Punjab. We are trying to create a casteless, creedless, religion-less, barrier-less society, where human beings will become human beings. We are trying to bring back to humanity – humanness. Because today, especially in India, we are not any more human beings; we are Sindhis, Madrasis, Gujaratis, Marwaris, what have you.

I have repeated with much sorrow in my heart, very often, a great author who wrote a book called *The Wonder That Was India*. I was very hurt by the title, *The Wonder That Was India.* It was a professor of history in Oxford called A.L. Basham who wrote that book. It extols India and its culture. Unfortunately, he came back forty years later to India and his first remark was, "India is there, but I don't find any Indians." There are only (the list that I repeated) Gujaratis, Marwaris, Tamilians, Telugus, Andhras, the whole bag of tricks. And our people are day by day trying to create more states, more languages, helping to fuel the infamous unholy dedication to the self of those in power and who are ruling us, trying to bifurcate states, trifurcate states, and we are foolishly, like sheep, going to the slaughter, going behind them.

I am sorry, it is not my intention to indulge in politics because it is forbidden in our Mission, but this is the way the country is going. You take up the newspaper and read it: "Tamil Nadu to be bifurcated," says a proposal. "Eastern zone to be bifurcated in the railways," et cetera, et cetera. And those in power assure us it is all for your good! Where lies your good *you* have to see; *you* have to determine. It is no use foolishly sitting on parched ground and praying for rain. God will say, "*Bevakoof* [Fool], what are you doing?" I mean if there is a God and He can listen to us, He will say, "I gave you sense, I gave you a heart – one to decide how a thing should done, and this *par excellence* [the heart], the only thing which can lead you into ethical, moral judgments to decide on what should be done." What should be done; how it should be done. No other creature in civilisation or in creation has this. The human being is special because he has a *man* [mind] and a *hridaya* [heart]. Today both are yoked together in an infamous pursuit of power, wealth and fame. So the clarion call of Swami Vivekananda, "Arise, awake," repeating the Vedas: *Uttishthata, jaagrata, praapyavaraan nibodhata* [Awake, arise, having approached the Chosen One, realise your goal] – it must be made alive again. Awaken out of your stupid casteism, out of your religions, out of your linguistic *bandhan* [bondage].

If you are belonging to a particular language and you want to speak *only* in that language, you are in a prison created by yourself. Same goes for caste, same goes for religion. What is destroying this world and human amity and love today is politics based on religion. There is an old saying that religion and politics make strange bedfellows. They should not be together anywhere, leave alone in bed. Because what will breed from such a union? Monsters! We in Sahaj Marg, we claim that we are beyond religion. We *transcend* religion. We don't say, "No religion." We go beyond religion. We continue to be Iranians, Indians, Hindus, Muslims, but we go beyond and we become human beings. We are citizens of America, of Canada, of Indonesia, of Japan; we transcend it and become world citizens. This is the call of spirituality.

I repeat: This Mission was founded in a very holy and divine aspiration of Lalaji Maharaj that there shall be a casteless, creedless, community-less centre – a civilisation arising, as my Babuji Maharaj put it, from the bones and ashes of a dead civilisation. The Mission was created for this purpose. The Mission has a constitution and by-laws. Today we have a wonderful working committee working for you. They are all dedicated persons, eminent persons in society, working for the single cause of how best this Mission can be managed and run to the benefit of abhyasis and no other. You know the Mission forbids the president from enjoying any pecuniary benefits. You know also that the Mission forbids selling spirituality. Therefore we have no paid membership.

There is no membership fee at all in this Mission: to join the Mission, to stay in the Mission, to participate in its activities, in its sittings. And in fact

Manapakkam ashram, and the one in the Himalayas (Satkhol), they are free of all charges, even for *rahan-sahan* [daily living] as we say in Hindi. This again is in an endeavour to pursue the very humanistic, what shall I say, aspiration held out by my master and put upon me as a charge when he made me his successor, that we must make this accessible to the poorest of the poor, to the most ignorant of the ignorant, because humanity is not the icing on top of the cake. Can you just eat the icing on top of the cake? You will get diarrhoea, dysentery and possibly every other disease. That is only on the top to bait you. You have to cut through it, go down to the bottom, and eat that. Humanity is like that. At the top is the cream of society. They cannot exist by themselves because that cream is made from buttermilk, from milk, from cows, from grass, from the water of the Yamuna, as Krishna reminded the people of Gokul.

You know that story: They were preparing to do Indra-*pooja*, pooja of Indra (worship of Indra). Young Krishna comes and says, "What are you people doing?" "No, no, we are offering pooja to Indra." He said, "Why? What has Indra done for you?" "No, no, all this butter which is going to Mathura..." He said, "Who gave this butter? The cows gave butter. How did the cows give butter? Because the grass gave its life. How did the grass come into being? From the waters of the Yamuna. Say thank you to all of them. Who is Indra here?" Then comes that famous episode that Indra became annoyed. He was angry. He was like one of our modern governors – egotistic, and he thundered down and rained down and then followed the famous episode of the Govardhana *giridhaari* [in which Lord Krishna lifts the Govardhana mountain, under which the people of Gokul find shelter from the rain].

We are such a society. You are protected – believe it. As long as you are a sincere abhyasi and don't fool around with this world, divine protection is ours as a right. Divine love is ours, because He cannot do anything but love us. God *is* love. We must believe in this. And *ipso facto*, whatever may happen to us, even when death comes to us, it is His love that manifests and says, "My son, or my daughter, you have suffered long enough. Now come back."

Shri Ram Chandra Mission, established in 1945, is for these sole purposes. It has no other aims. Now it has long been my desire to have a General Body Meeting of this Mission, but unfortunately there exists no General Body for two or three reasons. You cannot consider every abhyasi to be a member, because there are two hundred thousand members and such a body is unwieldy. Even if you say quorum, it means sixty, seventy thousand members, which is impossible. Now the constitution of the Mission and its by-laws confers upon the president to call an emergent meeting to which members of the public can be invited. So today you will excuse me if I call you all as members of the public who are following Sahaj Marg, to constitute yourself into a General Assembly at my request as president of this Mission, because I wish to make some proposals for which I need total approval from all of you. One, the power of the constitution, the power bestowed on the constitution is also permitting the president to *create* a General Body out of this huge mass of humanity, which is the general membership. We have no paid membership so I cannot say the paid members are the real members.

So I propose to create a General Body consisting of not more than three hundred members, which is easily manageable, which can be called. These members will be dedicated to spirituality, dedicated to your welfare, to human welfare, dedicated to proper conduct of the Mission's affairs. It will be composed of what I shall call disciples, of preceptors, of members in charge of centres, of large centres which are representative of our Mission, and for this purpose I want a hearty yes from all of you. [All say, "Yes."]

I thank you for your confidence and for your support, and I assure you that this is not merely a political statement from a political platform for self-benefit. On the day I came to my master, it was with his permission that I continued to serve in my job. Way back in 1964 when I still had about, I don't remember, more that twenty years' service, he told me, "*Dekho, jab tak chulha nahi jalega ghar me, tum chain se so nahi paaoge.* (As long as the fire is not lit at home – he meant the cooking fire – you cannot sleep peacefully.) So continue in your work." I said, "Then I will be hampered in my work." He said, "No. After all you work from eight to five, or nine to five, or ten to five. The rest of the time is yours. Do it. Bird flies on two wings; so you have your office to give you your material well-being, and you have the spiritual wing. Balance them and fly straight." I did, and I never found any problem in being a senior executive of TTK Company and also a preceptor in Shri Ram Chandra Mission. And of course, if I might be permitted to say so, the result is before you also here. And I thank you for permitting me to create a General Body as permitted in the constitution, in the way it confers its power on the president, and may Master bless you all on this auspicious Guru Poornima day.

I remember in 1967 or so, I was in Shahjahanpur, I did not know what was Guru Poornima. I mean I did not even know *poornima* [full moon night]. Because who goes out at night? I mean, I am interested in astronomy, but a poornima is a poornima, you see. We have had one married today also – one Purnima! But on the day I went to Shahjahanpur, somebody told me, "Today is Guru Poornima. It is good you are here." So I asked my Guru Maharaj, Babuji Maharaj, "What is today? They say it is Guru Poornima." He said in his typical fashion, "*Haan dekho, kehte to hain bhai yeh bahut uchh din hai, shreshth din hai*. [Yes, it is said that this is an important day.]" So I said, "What is the meaning of Guru Poornima?" He said, "*Dekho, kehte* *hain ki jo Guru ke saath is shubh avasar par aate hain, unke charan mein aate hain* [It is said that those who come to the Guru's feet on this auspicious occasion], their progress will be very many times faster." He said, "*Tumhari umar kya hai?* [How old are you?]" I said, "Forty." He said, "*Kamse kam chalees guna teri* progress *badhe.* [May you progress forty times as fast]." But it has nothing to do with age. Because spirituality can be had *now*, it may not be had for eternity, depending upon all of you. I can pray to Master. As somebody said, "Grace is unbounded. It doesn't seek deserving people. It comes." But by its very nature, if a window is closed, wind cannot blow through the house. If my heart is closed, I *cannot* receive that grace, not because grace will not come to me, but because *I* will not receive it.

I pray that my master will give you all the courage to transcend language, religion, caste, nationality, *every* other thing that separates a human being from a human being. May he bless you with this courage. Because – you know the word audacious is relevant here – we must have audacity to penetrate through all these barriers imposed upon us by society, by culture, by religion, break free of these bonds once and for all, and say, "I am free." The word audacious comes from *aude* – dare. *Aude sapere* – dare to think, dare to feel, dare to be free.

May He give us the courage and the daringness to be free. Blessed are they all who are his abhyasis.

May his love pour down on all of them, and may we all profit by his message. May we practise assiduously, ardently, sincerely. Sincerely means without giving up. I don't know Latin but somebody told me it comes from two Latin words, *sine chedere* – without giving up. Sincerity doesn't have any ethical connotations. One who does not give up but slogs is sincere. May he bless us with these things.

Thank you very much.

2

Tolerance

Today I have the proof that geography doesn't matter at all, because I am as happy to be with you all here as I would have been in the US. It is people that matter and not places, and the modern human being often thinks that his or her happiness is tied to a place, to a thing, things like that: I am happy in Florida; I don't like New York; I *hate* Boston" – things like that.

Places have nothing to do with our state of inner being. One who will be happy, will be happy everywhere. One who loves people will love them wherever they are, whenever they are. And that 'whenever they are' is significant, because we don't just love people when we meet them. We must be able to love them when they are not with us, and that applies of course in the ultimate extreme context, to parting at death. "Oh, I loved her so much," or "I loved him so much..." – this sort of bewailing. *Love is eternal*. People, through their

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25 July 2002, Chennai, India

hearts, are eternal. People by their hearts are all the same. No heart is different from another human heart. There is no male heart, there is no female heart. There are only hearts.

So you see, when we are able to overcome the barriers imposed on us by culture, by geography, by history, by tradition, by language, the heart flowers. Now here is a guy, he is a Czechoslovak. He is an Iranian living in Dubai who goes to Czechoslovakia, to the US and all that. He speaks the Czech language, he speaks Iranian and his language is 'Kambiz'. I first thought he was a hoax [laughs]. Because like Gurdjieff, he has shaved his head too [laughter] and beware of the bald head, they say sometimes. [To the abhyasi] "Hi, that's a joke!" And he is doing excellent work in Czechoslovakia, bringing some abhyasis back into the Mission, which our Czech prefect was not able to do, or perhaps he was not strong enough to do, or even perhaps he was unwilling to do. You know like male falling in love with female, often the foreigner finds better reception with a new idea than the locals.

I am sure the Americans find it difficult to talk to other Americans about Sahaj Marg. Because the other American thinks, "Who the hell does this fellow think he is? I am an American!" you know. And you can't say, "I am an American, too." Then he says, "What are you doing with Sahaj Marg?" That sort of thing you see. But when a black Indian like me or a hoaxy-looking Kambiz from Iran comes to the US, they say, "Well, let us hear this guy out. Maybe he has something." And therefore, we have to remember that what we think of as a national unification or a national oneness also works against us, because you would not accept from another brother or sister American, what you would accept, for instance, from me.

Babuji Maharaj came and he set, I should say, America on fire – though the fire was not visible, the heat was not there. That is because, by its nature, the fire of Sahaj Marg is a cool, loving fire. So if you expect to be burnt by it, sorry. It will burn off the dross *inside* you. Whereas the outer fire burns off the dross in gold, this burns out the dross inside without burning you up. Why I say all this is, we have constitutions, we have amendments – these are all for the purpose of making life easy and coexistence with governments easy. Breaking the law makes it difficult for us to survive. Going with the law makes it easy to exist.

You must have heard my talk yesterday, how I am going to create a small General Body in the Indian Mission. Obviously, when we have two hundred thousand abhyasis, you can't have all of them as members of the General Body. Because, if you want to call a meeting, the quorum says one-third, and to assemble sixty-six thousand people in one place – you have seen what a mess it is with thirty thousand. It would be impossible. So as you say, the founding fathers of the constitution, *my* founding father, Babuji Maharaj, in his wisdom gave the president powers to carve out a General Body out of this whole mass of humanity which constitutes the Mission, to make it easily handle-able and choose people for their dedication to their own self-development in spiritual life, for their dedication to service which alone can help you to help others, and their dedication to the ideals held up by the Mission.

So our choice will fall on such people who can also be called 'representatives' in a sort of a democratic sense. When you elect a representative from Boston, for instance, or from somewhere else, he is supposed to represent the people of that particular constituency. But here we will be more representative in that such people who interact with abhyasis must know what abhyasis want, what they need, what they lack, and present it before those who are in charge of fulfilling such needs. And therefore the General Body must be a representative body, capable of representing the whole mass of human beings who are called abhyasis, lay it before the Working Committee, or the Board of Directors as you say, who will have to appreciate that these requests (sometimes demands) have to be met. We should overcome this instinctive hesitation in accepting requests. Often people manifest a repugnance: "Oh, one more demand!" It is not good.

One who listens alone can speak. The art of patient listening is something which has been lost, because in today's culture of arrogance, intellect, pride, everybody seems to want to say, "I know. I have known it all along." When I see couples breaking up in marriage and the girl coming to me weeping after say seven years of marriage and saying, "I knew it all along, Chariji," I say, "Then what were you doing in the beginning? If you knew it all along, you had no business to tie the knot," as we say in India. "Oh, but it was hope..." You cannot have a foolish hope against a valid circumstantial evidence that this is not going to work. Isn't it? There comes the problem of desire. Therefore Babuji said, "Ask the heart. The heart is truth personified, truth crystallised into a living, pulsating organism." It says, "Do it. Do it. Do it." Not in the sense of Nike, "Just do it." Obey! My mind says, "No, no, this guy looks all right but...," it [the heart] says, "Do it." Not, "Go ahead." Don't! So we have to learn to listen to the heart.

Why I say this is, we require votes, we require confidence, we require cooperation, not for the sake of the Mission to run, but for the sake of the Mission to run for *your* benefit. After all, a ship doesn't go empty across the oceans. No shipowner runs a ship from, let us say, Calais to Dover or Calais to New York just for the fun of it. He runs it to help people to cross the ocean. In the process he benefits, we benefit, everybody benefits. That system works best where *everybody* benefits. Even if one partner to that coalition doesn't benefit, that coalition will break down. If one passenger is unhappy because the toilet doesn't flush, that ship is in trouble on its next voyage. Because he is going to go around the harbour and say, "Oh, come on. They don't have even clean toilets here." So our business is to ensure the satisfaction on the material level of all; the spiritual fulfilment to the extent that you all cooperate with your spiritual guide and thus meld the spiritual and the material well-being into a bird with two healthy wings which, because it has two wings capable of beating equally strongly, will fly straight. This must be our goal.

Now I hear something I am concerned about frequently, especially from white Americans, that the Indian membership goes into a huddle in every meeting, or in every celebration or in every whatever it is, weekend, and they start talking their native tongues – Telugu, Gujarati, Tamil, and they are always cooking rice and curry. I know, I have seen this happening, too. But you know, there is a certain helplessness to the situation. After all you cannot ask a young South Indian bride like her to, let us say, make cheeseburgers until she has been seven years in the US. Nor can I ask a young American bride to cook a *dosa*.

I remember an occasion when I was with Babuji Maharaj in London in the house of a very loving lady and her husband, in a mansion, in the best part – the most expensive part of London. And after two days, Babuji was, shall we say, fed up, literally, with salad and soup. So that lady, she was sensitive, she must have known. So she called a lady who had been a cook to an Indian in the embassy. Not in a family – embassy pantry, Indian embassy pantry. She introduced her, she said, "This is Kathleen, and Babuji, she is going to make *chapaati* [unleavened bread] for you tomorrow." The gleam returned to Babuji's eyes and he looked at me very fondly and he said, "Tomorrow you are going to get chapaati." And from that moment on, one o'clock in the afternoon to the next noon – twenty-three hours, the conversation was about chapaati! How a good chapaati is made, how it must puff up nicely, whether to put *ghee* on top of it or not; I mean, like a child anticipating a picnic on the morrow! And the day came. Babuji said, "No breakfast." [Laughter] Even his cup of cold milk he refused. He said, "No, no." And he looked at me and said, "Chapaatis." [Laughter] So I was wondering what was going to happen, because so much anticipation on the part of the master, something is going to go astray. And along came lunch and the beautiful tablecloth and napery and the cutlery, and the beautiful plates – all I think, what is that famous? – Sedgwick or something you have in English. Lovely! So Babuji, to hide his impatience, was turning the plate up and down and looking at it – very eager, awaiting the good news that chapaati is on its way, but trying to hide it.

And along came the lady with a big silver tray, with a big silver cover on it. Only the trumpeter was missing! And our hostess, Mrs. Vera Davies, she came, and she said, "Babuji, chapaatis." And with a flourish she took off the cover and there was *paapad* inside! [Laughter] You know what is a paapad? All of you know. And poor Babuji, he had to control himself. And to remind him of that I just looked at him like that. So I said, "Babuji, you first." [Laughter] You can imagine the sequel to that! And poor Babuji, this paapad wasn't even fried; it was just roasted on the fire. And being good Indian paapad, it tends to be sticky, the *dal* or the gram. And chomp, chomp – he was doing like that. And after one he got up, he said, "You know, it was very good. I am full." [Laughter]

So this is what anticipation does. But the point of the story is: don't expect chapaatis in London! Now, we could hardly blame that poor lady who was love personified. She loved Babuji like a lover. Because of her he went to England. She was the only person who could sort of entice him out of his home in Shahjahanpur and take him to England – and yet this, *faux pas* of paapad for chapaati!

So please bear with Indians; Indians bear with Europeans, Americans, what have you. Because you know when you get cheese sandwiches, I know not all Indians like them. You would rather prefer that funny concoction which looks likes potatoes but is not – Pringles! I used to eat this darn thing for some years wondering how they got this into this perfect shape every time, and then somebody broke the good news to me that it is reconstituted potatoes. Potatoes boiled and mashed and then stamped out, *tak, tak, tak, tak,* and fried. Otherwise nature does not make a perfect form like that. So, most Indians prefer that because they are also bred on potato chips here.

What I mean to say is, there is a great deal of need for a great deal of tolerance when we have an assembly like this, where several colours, races, languages, food habits, speaking habits, they are mixed up and put together in a pot and shuffled. And then you pull out a dice, afraid of what it is going to foretell for tomorrow. It may say haggis! (You even don't like it? Thank heavens for that!) So what I mean is, 'Be prepared' is the good old scout motto. Be prepared. Eat what comes. One of our maxims says, eat what is put before you with love. Because the love part of it is undeniable whether the Indian cooks or the American cooks, whether it is bread or chapaati, or whether it is tamarind rice from the Andhra kitchen, there is always love behind it. Accept the love, eat the rest, and He will bless us.

So the essence of Sahaj Marg, the essence of our growing brotherhood all over the world, you have seen. We have just concluded a mammoth celebration with a recorded twenty-nine thousand and five hundred attendance yesterday afternoon. Honestly, it's a tremendous job! First of all we had to go out of the ashram, which I didn't like. We have nearly forty-five acres. You heard that the meditation hall alone is three acres. So you see, much administration has to go into it, much talent is required, many abilities, and they don't come all in one person. So willy-nilly, whether you like it or not, you have all got to learn to cooperate. The man handling the screwdriver next to me may be a black man. The girl opposite, sitting chewing gum, may be a most beautiful girl from, I don't know, Norway. And the girl behind me munching away at sandwiches and, "Hey, Chari," may be somebody from Kentucky. We have to learn to live together, eat together, be happy together, meditate together, grow together. Togetherness must be the motto for our future. Like you know those three musketeers: Athos, Porthos and Aramis (D'Artagnan came later) – "All for one and one for all." This must be our motto.

So if we are to survive in the spiritual family without breaking our heads on "How the hell am I going to sleep tonight? My neighbour snores like a sawmill," well, learn to snore like a sawmill yourself and see if you can beat that guy at his own game. I assure you, even I have to put up with it. I may look as if I am living in a palace but I have snorers all around me, and the pity is I have four of them sleeping with me all the time. And when one is conscious that the other is snoring, he wakes him up. He falls promptly asleep and starts snoring himself. So the four of them are snoring in rotation, each one putting the other to sleep and waking up somebody else! So I am assured a continuity of this symphony, shall we say, because they are on four different scales, and if I tell them in the morning, "You were all snoring," they look at me with the eyes of incredulity. "Me, boss?" they say.

That is why, you know, I am so tolerant. I am tolerant not because I was born tolerant but because I have been hammered into tolerance by circumstances, by people helping me, by people loving me. Love requires the greatest tolerance, if you have to be loved; because in hatred you don't come near enough to have to smell a bad mouth, or things like that. But in love, what Samuel Johnson called the juxtaposition of two *orbicularis oris* muscles which, translated into rather untidy English, is a kiss. {Laughter} They are in such close proximity that you have to forget the other things. Either enjoy the kiss or keep away. Isn't it? And by association with love, and love is a kiss and a kiss is love, and this sort of romanticisation of situations, our olfactory system restrains itself from expressing itself too loudly. You say {sniffing}, "Okay, it is okay." {Laughter}

So if you can do it for one situation, often complex, often untidy, often snatched in a corridor, perhaps behind a tree which is popular in India... You know this tree {points to the peepal tree in the ashram} has nurtured many love affairs. I know one occasion when three couples were courting, and they divided it into three 120-degree zones, and all night they were mooching around after a mutual agreement that each sector shall not look into the next! And if my friend Satbir is here, he was one of them {laughs}. {Laughter}

Need imposes tolerance. Tolerance doesn't grow when there is no need. It is need which makes tolerance grow, provided you are willing to accept that need and to grow with the situation, become tolerant and then the situation becomes one of fragrance, and flowers and honey and all that sort of funny things. Everything in nature, everything in life is need-based. When I have to be tolerant, I have to be tolerant. Then my life progresses harmoniously, happily, healthily also, I should say. But if I rebel against the circumstances, I am alone, I am isolated. Then they say, "Oh, he is a fellow who thinks everybody stinks like a skunk, but *he* is the guy who stinks." And you also have this odium of being labelled as the only stinker! And what do you do? You are left out in the cold.

So tolerance is a must – for food, for people, for colours, for languages. "Oh this *awful* Hindi, you know..." Nothing awful about Hindi, or the atrocious English they speak across the Scottish border! I have difficulty in understanding it sometimes. I prefer their smiles because they are more intelligible. [Laughs] I mean that is by the way, see. The cockney English is even worse; and the King's English – I don't know. Because sometimes it is the king's, sometimes it is the queen's; which is which, you have to make out!

So you see I am in a mood to pull legs today and with the sole intention of making us look at ourselves with a little laugh. You must be able to look at yourself in the mirror and say to yourself, "Don't be such a pompous ass. We all know that I know good English, but the other guy, he is a *poor* Indian – heathens. But let me be tolerant." And then you wink at yourself in the mirror and say, "I can be tolerant, Chari, when I want to."

So in that spirit, brothers and sisters, let us grow together harmoniously, lovingly, accepting each other as *they* are. It is *their* business to change, not your business to change them. You have each one an inherent right, an inherent ability, an inherent responsibility to change *yourself*. That right is not conferred upon you to change anybody else. They have their liberty, to change or not change as they desire. That is their destiny; that is their future. You can help, but you cannot change.

The more you are tolerant, the more you accept people as they are, you will find, the easier they change. The more you try to impose change on them, you find that you will not change and they will also not change. This is why Sahaj Marg often apparently fails in many situations, because instead of prefects we have preachers – rabid preachers often – who think they are on the podium and like to preach hell and damnation. That is not acceptable in Sahaj Marg. Prefects have to learn humility, tolerance, love, and above all learn to listen.

Thank you for listening to me.

LOVE IS THE WAY OF
INNER AWAKENING TO THE REALITY

'S 75th BIRTH NNIVERSARY
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Need for a Spiritual Renaissance

Good morning, *guten morgen*, *bonjour*, *bongiorno*, *zdravstvuite, dobroye utro*, everything else included. Now, I want to know what you all expect out of this meeting. Do you have any expectation or is it just coming together to look at each other, smile?

Q: My question is this: you have been talking a lot about tolerance these days. Now I would like to know, in our centres what do we do when we see that tolerance is not going on properly? Do we tolerate it or do we somehow try to...?

PR: Well, tolerance means you have to first tolerate even intolerance. Isn't it? I mean anybody can tolerate tolerance. That's what Jesus said, "Love those who hate you." It is easy to love those who love you. That is not very human. It is just taking advantage of a situation. "Oh, he loves me," or "She loves me and I love her."

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26 July 2002, Chennai, India

That is not spiritual – can be human, perhaps it is more animal, but certainly not spiritual. Tolerance means it must begin with you. You understand? Love must begin with you. Teaching must begin with you, in the sense that you follow what you teach, yourself. We are all good teachers for others. We don't want to follow it ourselves. *That* is the problem. It is like a doctor who smokes and tells his patient not to smoke because he can get lung cancer. And he says, "What about you, doc?" He says, "Don't worry about me. I have been smoking for fifty years." And you know, next time you go by to see the doctor, 'Clinic closed. Doctor dead.' Isn't it? So that is the problem of teaching, of tolerance, of loving. We all expect to be loved, but we don't want to give love.

And the problem for me... I don't know if any problem exists really, but as far as the organisations in Europe are concerned, over the past few years I seem to have lost contact with my Missions abroad. I have less and less contact with more and more Missions abroad [laughs], sort of invertendo. Even with the Danes, I don't have much contact nowadays. With the Germans, practically none at all. With the French, with a few. I mean, I hope you have all matured spiritually enough to be free of my interference. If that is the case, praise the Lord! Because I would like to be relieved, and if you are all mature enough to run your own spiritual lives satisfactorily, capably, goal-orientedly, you should all congratulate the great Master for that.

But if it is a sign of other trends, that "we can manage our Mission ourselves without some crazy Indian interfering here", you would do well to think over it twice, thrice, four times, and seek guidance. My intention is not to interfere in your lives. It was never my intention to interfere in your lives. I came with my master two, three times, and any interfering, *he* did. And that is why we are still here. It is Babuji who came into your lives. Chariji was only the tail of the dog. And he continues to be the tail of the dog. And like a good dog's tail it is always wagging; it still wags. So now let me know what you want from this meeting.

Q: Master, I would like your guidance in London, please.

PR: In London? Well, I am not coming down to particulars now. I am still at the stage of the general.

Q: [inaudible]

PR: I beg your pardon, Ros?

Q: [inaudible]

PR: Integration? Well, I have been mentioning in some of my talks that you have one Europe now, you have one Euro currency, and you have possibly a

European government. Why can't you have a European spirituality? Isn't it? And because of my age and my, shall I say, physical infirmities which you cannot see, my capacity to travel to you all is very limited. Also there is an element of unwillingness to go out now, because I have been travelling to Europe practically every year from 1984 till the year before last, the year 2000. Seventeen or eighteen years continuously, year after year, sometimes two visits a year, and I am tired. I am really tired. Because my work in India has been neglected during this time and it was shocking for me to be reminded by my master in something resembling a message. He said, "It is better that you travel in India now." It was a positive mandate, an instruction. He said, "Don't go to countries where you have been too easily available. They have no regard for such easy availability. They don't appreciate it. Work where your work is appreciated, where it will bear fruit. And your travel in India will be in a land where the spiritual atmosphere is definitely better, and where your health will also be better." I mean, this is a positive instruction from my master.

Now I would not be so sad if I gave you all up, but if my master gave you all up it would be a tremendous… "What a fall was there, my countrymen! Then I and you and all of us fell down…"* So you better do something about it.

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* Quotation from Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*.

Q: Master, I refuse that Master gives us up. I am here to give you my soul and you give...

PR: I don't want one soul. I want a whole fishnet full of souls.

Q: Yes, but I can be responsible to work a fishnet for you...

PR: Please, I don't want all this. I am asking for a general reawakening of the spiritual fervour that used to be there in the seventies, partly in the eighties, and which has definitely declined over the past five, six years, seven years. People are afraid.

Q: Master, how do we increase our numbers in Europe?

PR: No, it is not the numbers. It is the quality of those present here, and those who have not come here, perhaps an equal number who have not come here. *You* must show the example that this is what Sahaj Marg has done for me. Are you willing to do it?

Q: Yes. Yes.

PR: Then do it. Because we definitely need a reawakening, a resurgence, a renaissance if you will, of spiritual...

Q: But we need your help.

PR: My help has never been lacking. Can you tell me in what way I have not helped you? I have come to your countries, I have sat there for months, delivered hundreds of lectures, helped you to mobilise funds, made receipts myself if the Danes will remember, morning after morning, and much to the astonishment of Steen Bruun, after paying for that Vrads Sande Ashram I left a surplus behind. Where is Steen? Was it true or not?

A: It is true.

PR: So I have been your money collector, your friend, your preacher, giver of sittings, shoulder for people to weep upon. I have performed your marriages. In what way have I not helped you? I have named your children whenever you wanted them named. Of course, I have received a lot of love, a lot of hospitality, a lot of friendship, but that is not my aim. My main objective in life is the spiritual life. Cakes and ale I can have from Somerset Maugham, even though he is dead. I hope the English appreciate that little joke! [Laughs]

So, if I am to come back to Europe it will only be when I see the flame brightening a bit. I will assure you I have no intention of coming to Europe this September, none at all. The Swiss will be shocked, David Chaille may be very upset, but I can't help it.

Because I do not come to support fundraising, or to present dissertations before governments, or to try to reconcile the Christian Church with Sahaj Marg, or to fight a battle which will be definitely a losing one against this idea of Sahaj Marg being a cult. So be it if Europe does not want Sahaj Marg. We don't take our wares where they are not received willingly, lovingly, voluntarily. We don't *sell* Sahaj Marg. So on those terms *only* I will come to Europe again. Europe has no fascination for me. It never had any fascination for me.

So please gird up thy loins and walk. I am serious, this is not a joke. Until my heart says, what are you doing here? Go to Europe... Because when my master says, "What are you doing abroad? Travel in India where your work will be appreciated, where it will be received, where it will benefit people, and where you will benefit yourself – because it is more conducive to your health in the spiritual atmosphere in India, which you cannot find outside." A very sad commentary. It made me very sad that my master should tell me that Europe stinks, spiritually.

So he needs me to survive so that I can carry on his work wherever it can be done well. I do not see any argument about that. If Ros was my employer she would not allow me to go gallivanting in a market where I cannot sell what she has to sell. She will say, "What the hell are you doing in Brighton? Go into Cornwall," or some such place. So my employer, my boss, my master, he says, "Enough." And he told me in this message what my wife used to tell me year after year. She said, "You are too free, you are too easily accessible, you are too friendly. You have not maintained a distance which you should have maintained and therefore you are just Chari to everybody and they do not take you seriously."

Well, I want to be Chari to everybody. I am very proud when the children in Denmark say, "Hey, Chari," with all their love. I am very proud, I am very happy. I feel like a grandfather whose grandchildren come around and say, "Hey, Chari." Very sweet. But you know, my master is my master and I cannot disobey. So until he releases me from my work in India and says, "Now go forth," I am afraid I will not be able to take a decision on my own. And this is not something I am telling you from a fanciful imagination. It is a fact.

I have been in Satkhol often, seeking not rest, but seeking communication from my master. Once I decided to retire from this life and go and settle in Satkhol, leaving people to handle it here who are more competent, more capable, more qualified. And Babuji appeared to me in between sleep and waking early morning and he said, "Parthasarathi, if you want to withdraw from the work, you will soon want to withdraw from life itself. And that is not permitted for people like us." I am quoting. So twenty-four hours later I was back in the plains. [Laughs] How can I find peace in a place of which my master does not approve? Another time I went up, praying for guidance about my visits to Europe, and this was the message: "Work in India. You have been too easily accessible, too often accessible. They don't appreciate the value of your visits, of your teaching. Stay in India where the atmosphere is better for your health."

So, when I seek guidance and it comes, I cannot possibly ever go against it. So it is now up to you all to pray to him, make something of your spiritual lives, set aside all prejudices, become one. [A baby babbles.] Yes, that is what I am saying. [Laughs] And then you see the result. Okay? May Master bless all of you.

Thank you.

4

Spirituality Unites

Well, there is nothing very important I am going to say. Yesterday they had a meeting – David Chaille, Santosh Khanjee and Krishna – because David Chaille strongly feels that instead of the Mission being projected in public, the Mission should do the spiritual work. And we have an organisation called *La Fondation Sahaj Marg Spiritualité* in Switzerland that should do the conduction of seminars, *proprieté pour les ashrams* [ashram properties], et cetera. So I find that I am sympathetic to that view. And after all, the Foundation has had no work so far except to finance scholars who come here every year, twelve, fifteen, sixteen of them. So it is a suggestion that I have considered acceptable.

The subsequent trend of thought was that we should sell Augerans and Lausanne. Lausanne I believe will fetch a good price because the property below, which was supposed to be developed long

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28 July 2002, Chennai, India

ago, is probably likely to be developed now. So if we get a good price it is very good. Of course the French Mission will keep the money in France, although not much of the money was from French abhyasis. There was a large chunk of it from abroad, from other European countries, from America, from Malaysia, Singapore. So we have to find a way of using that money for the Foundation. I like a place called Valence in France. The proposal is that we, SRCM France, buy a minimum of fifteen hectares of land there with the POS [organisation that determines the rules of development of a project] or the PLU as you call it now, permitting us to build; and lease that land to the Foundation which will then build the ashram so that the ashram will belong to the Foundation, on land leased from SRCM France.

I think it's an excellent suggestion, though I believe many people are not in favour of it. It is not a question of who is in favour or who is not in favour. It is a question of one significant fact, that when we talk of selling Augerans, everybody wants to keep Augerans. It is human nature to value things when we are about to lose them. Daughters like their mothers only when the mother is dying; till then they don't even see them. It is a very natural human tendency. What is lost is very valuable. What we have is useless. This is a common human tendency, a failing. So this is an emotional reaction. I don't think it is a real reaction. It is not a sensible reaction. It is not a logical reaction. It is an emotional reaction. And if we decide to keep Augerans, I am sure the French will not use it, the Swiss will not use it, the Germans least of all.

You all know from the very beginning that Augerans was supposed to be an international ashram, and it was supposed to be frequently used by groups who will come there in small groups of forty, fifty, whatever you have, to conduct their own seminars: Swiss group one week, German group another week, Belgian, Dutch, what have you. But it has not worked, and even the French don't patronise it any more. For me it is very sad that a Mission and an ashram located in France is not even used by the French, on very specious excuses of "it is too far", "it is in the jungle", et cetera, et cetera. When we bought it, it was a wonderful place because it was a *vacances* [vacation]. When it became an ashram, it lost its charm, very much like the French temperament that a girlfriend is good, a wife is useless.

Nothing permanent is valued in Europe. Temporary liaison, temporary affairs *de coeur* [of the heart], they are wonderful! So you have pictures like *Love Story*. You have pictures like, I don't know, *Honeymoon* [laughs]. I don't know if there is a picture like *Honeymoon*. *Les Trois Nuits* [The three Nights], does a picture exist like that? I don't know. It would be wonderful! Permanence is obnoxious to Europeans. And it is very sad that Switzerland being over the border, two hours from Augerans, they don't come. But the Germans who promised so much? I can understand, you see, from Munich it is eight hours by road, but somebody has to use it. An ashram cannot be the same distance for everybody from everywhere, can it?

So what shall we do except to sell it and use the money to better purpose elsewhere in France? But this time as a truly international ashram. The ashram will not be owned by SRCM France, but by the Sahaj Marg Spirituality Foundation. The land will be leased to the Foundation at a 'one egg per year' let us say, something like that. The law will permit it. We will have the use of the Mission funds which are lying dormant in France, because money cannot be sent out of France even in a combined Europe. And this has proved to be what I have been saying all these years about your European Union, one Europe, that it is a marriage of convenience, for mutual profit. There is no emotional integration of the people of Europe. Euro, one currency, nobody likes. The Germans hate it, the British have not subscribed to it, the Danish would have liked to kill it in the very beginning but they won by narrow margins of three votes and two votes, which is considered a democratic process in Europe. Forty-nine and a half percent against, fifty and a half percent for – *voila*! They did it twice, so-called political referendum. On such democracy hangs the fate of Europe!

I know the French are very fond of democracy. *Liberté, egalité, fraternité* [freedom, equality, brotherhood], et cetera, but where is it? I am tempted to ask, like it was asked once in a famous novel, *Quo vadis Domine*? Where are you going, you people? *Quo vadis* in English means Whither goest thou? I have no answer for it.

Q: [inaudible]

PR: Where are you going? *Quo vadis*? It is Latin, good Latin. *Domine* means God, Master, from which comes the Dominican Order of monks. So you see, somebody has to take some direction, sometime. Politically you are not integrated, linguistically you are not one, monetarily it is a sham. How long it will last, I don't know. I would not be surprised if the reserve banks of all your countries have got their own currencies ready for distribution again if this European Union should fail. I would not be surprised at all.

Spirituality offers the help of uniting all these disparate, shall we say, goals of life into one solidly united group, working for one common purpose, practising one common method, living as one family, speaking many languages, having many cultures. After all, if in India which is I don't know how many times as big as Europe, we can live together with two hundred-odd languages, so many cultures – you have seen how Indians live together – why should not it be possible in Europe?

So it is only with this idea that this proposal has been made. I repeat what I said day before yesterday. I have no wish to intrude in your lives. I have no wish to impose Sahaj Marg on any one of you. I will not bring my teachings, my Master's teachings, my Grand Master's teachings, unless they are asked for. You know, even in Christianity it says, "Ask and it shall be given to you." So all this idea of the human heart and giving everything that we have to everybody else does not work because what is given free is never valued. Everywhere. It is the modern psychology. If you say, "This book is free," they will say, "No, no, I will buy one from the shop," because people are suspicious of free things.

So it is for you all to consider what you want. The Mission is there. It is not mine, it is not yours; it is ours. The ashrams are there. They are not mine, they are not yours; they are ours. Our Missions are not French or German or Danish; they are Missions of Shri Ram Chandra Mission, to be used by people who will come there for spiritual growth, spiritual benefit, to create a brotherhood of humankind.

From the beginning there has been this tendency to think of a Danish ashram and a Swiss ashram and a French ashram, and things like that. Anyway, there was some logic in those days when Europe was cut up into so many countries, but today you are one Europe. So you should also integrate the ashrams into one ashram, Shri Ram Chandra Mission ashrams *in* Europe. Given the heart – h-e-a-r-t (because the French will listen as 'art'). It is not art that we are talking about, but the heart, *avec 'h'*. It is possible. After all, we see in countries like Belarus, in Iran, in Dubai, in some republics in the South African continent, how closely they are able to work, how they grow, and how they are developing. It is a pleasure to see them. The Iranian people can hardly afford to come here, but they come. If I go out of India this year it will be to Dubai for a few days, because from Iran to Dubai they have flights for a hundred and fifty dollars including three days free stay in Dubai. So if I go to Dubai, all the Iranians who cannot afford to come to India will be there.

Now, what brings them there? What brings them here? I mean, you did not come to see a birthday celebration of an old fool, no? Birthdays are celebrated every year and I never celebrate my birthday. It has become a recent imposition on me because when my birthday is celebrated, I am the biggest sufferer. For fifteen days I have no peace, I have no rest, my health suffers. I consider myself responsible for the welfare and the safety of everybody who is here. Of course you will say it is foolish. You will say, "No, no, we can look after ourselves, Chariji. Why should *you* worry about us?" But that is my job, that is my nature, and that is my idea of responsibility. When you are here, I am responsible. So for me it is a big burden, you see. If Christ carried a cross of wood, I carry a cross of moral responsibility for all of you. And it is a very, very heavy cross, growing heavier as I grow older.

So it is not my intention to any more come to France and work for you. And especially in the last years I have to come to raise enough money to run your ashrams. It is a well-known fact. Repeatedly I have been told, "Only when you come and we have a big seminar, a thousand two hundred people come, we have enough funds to run the Mission for the next one year, a little more maybe." So I have to go to France to bring money for France; I have to go to Denmark to raise money for the Danish ashram. That is not any more my purpose. I was there to buy Augerans for you. I sat there for five months, if you will remember, in France. We bought Augerans. Similarly, I went and sat in Denmark for three months, bought Vrads, and left them with enough money to manage for at least the next one or two years. My work was over.

My work is now only spiritual, if you wish that I should help you. If you say, "No, no, we can manage. After all, Chariji, I have been an abhyasi for fifteen years. I know how to meditate and do the cleaning." Of course, *Vive la liberté!* I am also all for freedom. *Vive l'egalité.* But *ou est notre fraternité?* [Where is our brotherhood?] No answer, because it does not exist. Some great philosopher, Voltaire, and others of that tribe may have said it. But I don't think there was ever a fraternité except on occasions like when you wanted to slaughter a queen of France and celebrate it as the Bastille Day with great pride. On such occasions there was a wicked fraternité, a violent fraternité. But when everything is well, there is peace in the land, where is the fraternité? When there is spirituality, where is the fraternité?

So the task of rebuilding spiritual societies in Europe is yours. My help is there when you request it. Otherwise I have enough to do here. You have seen what I can do if I am allowed to do it. And there was a suggestion today by somebody that I am favouring some countries and not favouring others. That is a blatant lie. For me there are no favourites, whether abhyasis, or countries, or ashrams. If I have favourite ashrams, they are Manapakkam and Satkhol. I don't think they can ever be duplicated on this earth again. Because it is not the building, it is the spirituality that is... You can feel it living here. That is what makes an ashram.

You know, in school I read a story, an English lesson of what is the difference between a house and a home. So many answers came but then one child answered that the sun shines *on* a house, it shines *inside* a home. Similarly, what is the difference between a big structure like one of your Palais Royale or something like that, and this ashram? They *talk* of spirituality; there *is* spirituality here. It is not a big difference, but at the same time it is not a small difference. So it is for this difference that we are doing everything that we can in conducting a Mission, conducting meditation, holding satsangh, giving discourses. Single purpose. Can we create this small, almost imperceptible, impalpable difference between the outside and this? If you can, you are a spiritual being. If you can't, at least sit there and try to become one. If you are unwilling to even do that, what should I say? *Bonjour, bon voyage* [goodbye, have a good trip]?

So please understand that we are not imposing anything on you. No unwilling student can be taught. Whether young or old, it is immaterial. Unless you are willing to learn, nobody on earth can teach you, even God could not teach. Where is the question of another man teaching you? So go home, discuss – don't dispute – discuss, and see what you have to do for yourselves because after all, anything you do is for yourselves. I thank you for your patient hearing because many of you have left already, many are leaving today, and perhaps I won't be able to see so many of you together again for I don't know till when.

A: Master, I am so sad that you say you are not coming to Fiesch. There are many people also there who wanted to come but …

PR: Yes, but this is always the argument, that I am told there are so many people waiting there to see you. But for what purpose, again. Now I don't want to waste more time, your time, because your time is valuable, mine is not. I would like to give you all a sitting before you all leave. But there should be no children, please. So take the next five minutes to sit comfortably, relax and then we will start meditation at half past five. *Ça va?*

A: *Ça va.*

PR: *Merci beaucoup.* [Thank you very much.]

5

Be Attentive

This morning I was thinking about everything that has happened and also what will happen in future. And yesterday I was watching this DVD about Krishna, not the *Mahabharata* – there was another serial, *Krishna*. And in that serial (it is about Kamsa), Kamsa is calling, "Hey Vishnu, come in front of me! I will destroy you, you *maayaavi* [illusionist]. You cannot escape me," et cetera, et cetera. And Lord Krishna in Goloka [eternal abode of Lord Krishna], is sitting watching it and blissfully smiling. He is supposed to have a very charming, beautiful smile – Lord Krishna. Narada comes there and he says, "Lord, this man is constantly thinking of you. Will he attain you?" He says, "Of course, there is no doubt. One who constantly thinks of me *has* to attain me." Then Narada says, "I have one doubt, my Lord." He says, "Narada, how can *you* have doubts?" You are *triloka sanchaari*, *trikaala jnaani* [one who moves among the

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21 September 2002, Chennai, India

three worlds, knower of past, present and future]; you are a famous *rishi*, *muni* [saint]," all sorts of things. He says, "Yes, but I know your *bhaktas* [devotees] who think constantly of you also achieve you. And your *virodhi* [enemy] who is also thinking constantly of you will achieve you. What is the difference?"

I have answered this question in some of my talks long ago, when talking of the *dwarapalas* [gatekeepers] of Lord Vishnu. When the Lord was coming down to the earth to take *avatar* [incarnate form], they said, "Lord, we cannot remain here alone in that *loka* [world] *(Narayan loka)*." So he says, "What do you want?" The dwarapalas say, "We want to come with you." He says, "All right, you can come with me and live on *bhooloka* [earth] for three *janmas* [lives] as my virodhi, or for ten janmas as my bhakta. Choose!" So they say, "We cannot stand ten janmas of separation; so be it, we will come three janmas as your virodhis." So they come as Kamsa, Shishupala, Ravana, Kumbhakarna and Hiranyakashipu and Hiranyaksha.

So I discussed this same question with Babuji Maharaj: How can these people achieve? He said, *constant remembrance*. It does not matter how you achieve constant remembrance, so long as you are able to achieve it. "I will finish this fellow," you say, and you are thinking constantly of Him. It seems to be more effective, because what they got in three janmas, poor bhaktas have to wait for ten janmas. I am not suggesting that you should all become my enemies and achieve it in three janmas! We don't want to achieve in three janmas; we want to achieve it in this life.

So the Lord offered only a choice between three lives and ten lives. Here my master has offered you in *one life*. Whether it should be as a bhakta or as a virodhi I don't know. Some people are trying that also now. [Laughter] And I hope what Lord Krishna said will hold and that they will also achieve, because after all, brothers are brothers and we have no ill will towards anybody. And if Lord Krishna could smile at all that Kamsa is shouting – "Vishnu come here, Vishnu go there. Where are you, Vishnu? Come in front of me if you have the guts," et cetera. So we have to take these things as manifestations at which, at least, I should smile. Not *issmile* as they say in UP, but smile. In Uttar Pradesh they always say 'issmile'. So I say, "Ismail? Where is he?" [Laughter]

So that is what I was thinking when we saw this: how we must learn to tolerate adversity, criticism, everything else. And this is a training as much for me as for you. If you ask me why are you upset... I have seen Babuji upset, Srinivasa Rao has seen Babuji – he has been with him. Not all of you have known Babuji Maharaj, because many of you are abhyasis after he attained mahasamadhi. But we have known Babuji; I have known him for so many years. I have travelled with him, I have been with him for months together. Karnataka people have been especially fortunate, because in those days many of them were members right from 1956, 1957.

Of course, a long stay with somebody does not necessarily mean you understand him or her, because I have seen most marriages – even after thirty years there is no proper understanding between husband and wife. Understanding needs *understanding*. I must understand that I have to understand, because otherwise life is miserable. If each one is going in his own direction, the wife says, "Why should I concede? He is always wrong. Do you think men are...?" They turn an individual situation into a group situation. "Do you mean to say men are always right?" I said, "I am not talking of men; I am talking about husband and wife."

So, we must first understand that I have to understand, to understand. It is like learning a language first, and then understanding that language. Isn't it? So this wisdom must come only through a pressure to understand, a compulsion to understand, and if in that pressure and compulsion you break down, you are lost. If you resist, you are even more lost. If your ego says, "Why should I understand? Why does the other party not understand?" you have conceded defeat not to the other person but to yourself. I have defeated myself in this voyage of self-discovery which means Self-discovery – discovering the Self that is residing in me as my *antaryaamin*, as my creator, my God, my beloved, my protector, my everything.

So first of all, we must know why we have to understand, and how to understand. Without understanding there cannot be harmony, there cannot be amity, there cannot be brotherhood. The more you try to understand why your wife behaves in a particular way – or your brother or your father or your sister or even your mother – the more harmony will come, the more love will grow. The more you say, "Why doesn't my mother understand me? Why doesn't my father understand me?" It is me, me, me, all the time – arrogance, ego, pride. That house, that family, will continue to be without harmony, without love, without anything.

So we have to make use of all available circumstances to help us in our growth to become perfect human beings. That is what Babuji Maharaj said is the goal of spirituality. Not to be God – perfect human beings, because human perfection, Babuji Maharaj said, is the same as a divine way of life. It is not that a perfect human being is not God, but God *must* be a perfect human being if he comes as a human being. Therefore, when we talk of Lord Rama, we say he is a perfect human being: in his behaviour, in his culture, in the way he interacted with people, in his *pitru vaakya paripaalanam* [following the words of his father], everything; he was perfect. In India, Lord Rama's *charitra* [story] is held out as an example of a human life well-lived, properly lived. Krishna's life was not a human life; his was a divine life. That is why about

Ramudu we have so much in so many temples, and in so many ways of worship. He was an example of a perfect human being. And he underwent so many adversities, isn't it? Immediately after marriage he was nominated as the prince who would succeed; he went to *vanavaasa* [live in the forest] – fourteen years. Every possible suffering, indignity, ending in a war; then the suspicion about his own wife, his separation from her to this extent that his own two children, whom he did not know, reviled him. All that he went through with equanimity, without his expression ever changing.

So when we have examples to follow, we must *follow* them, not just say, "O, Ramudu devudu, ante [Rama is God]" – not like this. I see people doing this here also. This is hypocrisy. Hypocrisy means doing something with your body and not with your heart. You understand? Physical expression of something which does not exist in the heart – it applies to love within the family, between brothers, between father and son, between mother and children, between husband and wife, in everything.

I said in another talk the other day, to another group like you, that if your body is somewhere and your heart is somewhere [else], it is a lie, it is a shame, it is hypocrisy. I hope some of you who are here will remember that. I don't want to repeat those words. So trouble comes only when I am somewhere and I speak somewhere else. Or as Babuji said, "You come here and your mind and heart are at home; your body is here." He said, "If you are so worried about your house, go stay there; but when you come here, bring yourself with you." Otherwise, who will benefit? Nobody will benefit.

Most of all, in spiritual life, there must be this integrated presence. I am here means, me, my body, my mind – all are here together as one entity. Not sitting and thinking of, "Oh, potatoes have gone up in price. Cauvery water – not flowing. Karnataka – useless people." That is not meditation. Your mind is in so many places; your heart is maybe with your sick child at home and your body is here. None of the three will meditate, because you are not *really* meditating. You are sitting with your eyes closed, thinking of a hundred things. So here, if you are not present all together: *tan, man, hriday* [body, mind, heart] – three things, it is better not to be here at all. Now there are many people who are here (I should say, I mean without intending to harm anybody's feelings), I would say, I would hazard an expression that perhaps ninety percent of abhyasis are like that. That is why we have so little success rate in spiritual practice. It is not the fault of the system, it is not the fault of the Mission; it is only the fault of the abhyasi.

Even when you eat, if you are thinking of your office and your worries and gobbling food without chewing it, you are going to suffer – even in a physical thing. If you are bathing and thinking of your office, probably you have come out with the soap still on your body because you haven't completed your bath. So you see, it applies to the physical world, it applies to the mental world. I cannot be in the examination hall and counting my sheep which are on the farm, and answering a paper in mathematics. They will ask, "Five plus five – how much?" and I will say 202, because I have 202 sheep on my farm. And I will get zero because, he will say, "Five and five, if he says is 202, either this is some new system of mathematics for the future... Who knows?"

So please don't think this is only a spiritual requirement; it is a requirement for all life, that if you are to be successful in any field, in any enterprise, in any endeavour, the *whole of you* must be present there from eating, to working, to playing. Suppose you are playing on the football field and you are thinking of an ice cream, the ball will pass you. He will give you a pass, you will miss it; the whistle will blow, it is out, and the ball is taken up to be thrown, and your teammates will curse you. "Where the hell were you?" they will ask, which is a real question because, where were you? "I was there, but..." "No, you were not there; you missed that ball." Why did you miss it? Because you were *not attentive* – not attentive means I am not where my body is. For instance, I stumbled just now. I should not have stumbled. I stumbled because when I took that step I was thinking of an abhyasi. Or maybe I was thinking of what to say, or maybe I was thinking

I should not be here at all, why did I come, so many things. Or maybe I was thinking what is there going to be for lunch, and had I fallen properly there would be no lunch, no dinner, nothing for me hereafter. Isn't it?

So, attentiveness does not mean putting your mind and all these funny things, putting a torch. It means me, my mind, my soul, everything is here at this time, at this spot completely. It is a complete presence. Babuji used to say, "What is the difference between a perfect man and God?" He said, however perfect a man may be, even up to the point of divinisation, he can be only in one place at one time. If he is in the bedroom, he cannot be in the kitchen. If he is in the office, he cannot be at home. But God can be everywhere at all times. Anywhere at any time, He is there. That is why He is called Omnipresent. This is the only difference between man and God.

What is the other important difference, very important for spiritual aspirants? There is a big difference – that man can surrender only once, but God surrenders Himself to His devotees again and again. He can go on surrendering through eternity to infinite numbers of bhaktas. We can surrender only once. Therefore when we say, "I am surrendering again, my beloved master," it is a lie. That means you did not surrender the previous time. Surrender is accomplished when your ego is left behind, when your desires are left behind and there is nothing but the master. It is not “I and my master.” Even I am not there; then only it is surrender. Babuji Maharaj used to say, “If you say, ‘*I* surrendered,’” he said, “how can it be surrender?” Because you say, “I surrendered,” and the ‘I’ is still there, isn’t it? But if that surrender is proper, true, a real spiritual surrender, you are no more there. Now your mind, your will, everything is with him; your body is his to command and it is for you to obey.

So, when you are able to reach (I hope all of you will), if you are able to reach that state of self-surrender to the Almighty, service through obedience is all that is left of sadhana. If he says destroy this building, you destroy it. You don’t ask, “Why? No, no Sir, but it was built with so much labour, so much money. You are the president of the Mission. How can you give this order? You are wasting public money.” You may be right, but you are no longer a devotee, and you don’t earn your merit.

You remember the famous case of a slave Babuji Maharaj has told. The emperor had brought back a very expensive tree-like thing made of gold and jewelleries and diamonds and, I mean you cannot even calculate its value. Now, he had a slave called Ayaz and the courtiers were all jealous of Ayaz because this great *shahenshah* [emperor], he loved Ayaz so much. So the courtiers were jealous. One day they asked him, “Why do you love Ayaz so much? You don’t even love us so much. We are your courtiers, we are nobles.” So he smiled, and he told one by one, "Destroy this tree." But they said, "Majesty, how can we do it? Such a beautiful thing! You have brought it all the way from India, untold precious things are hanging from it." And one by one they said no. He called Ayaz. He said, "Destroy it." Ayaz pulled out his sword and smashed it to pieces. He said, "That is why I love him."

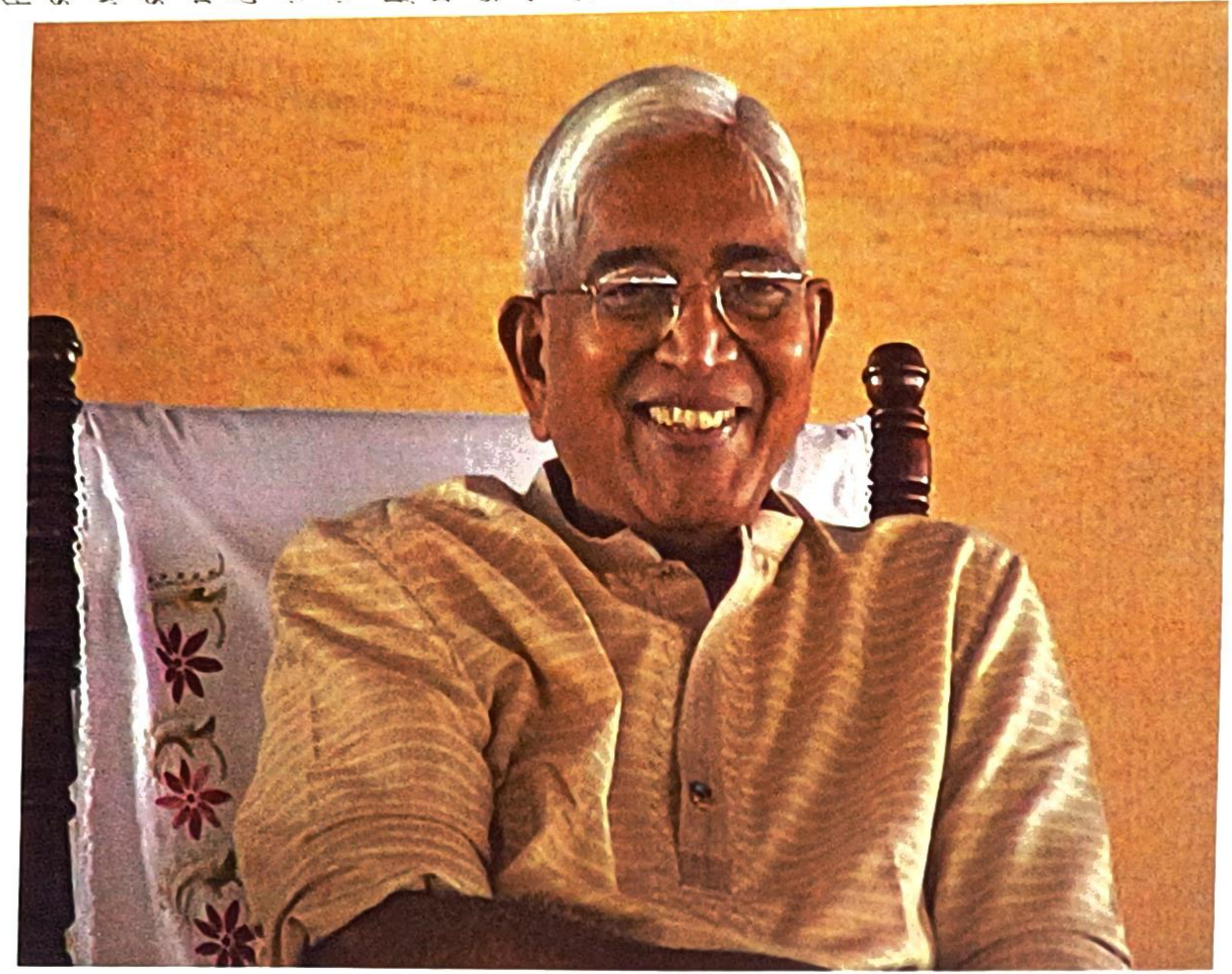
So you see, when you come to the culmination of spirituality, there is no other relationship between the one who is no more there (only his body is there) and his so-called master except of obedience to the master's will, whatever it may be.

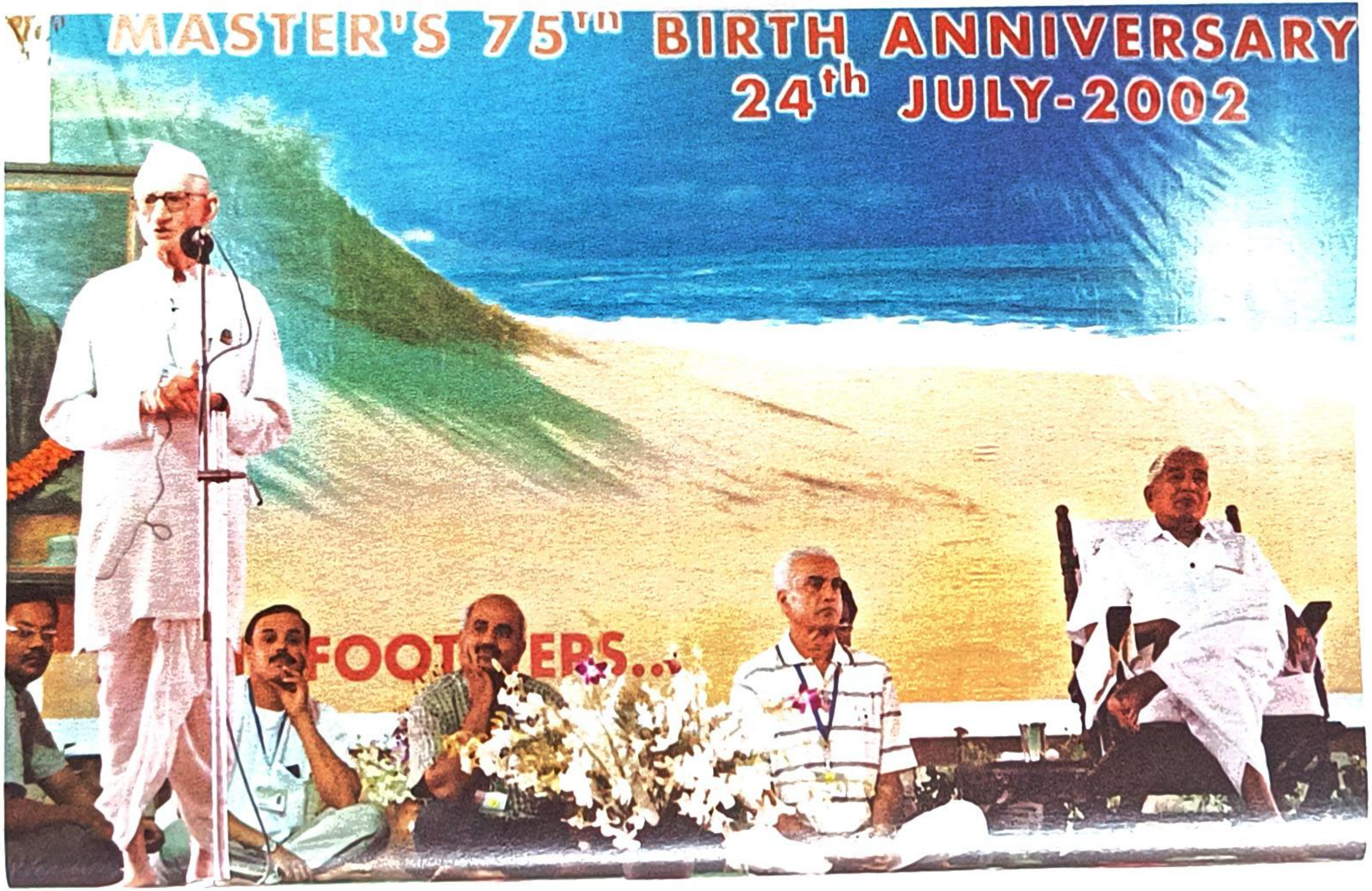
In the Hindu Puranas, you have the famous story of Parashurama. Keralites at least should know that story very well, because it is called Parashurama *kshetram* [land of Parashurama]. I don't think they follow it either; but "*adhi endhini Sir, ammaye adikkunne,* how? *Arrivilla.* [How can he kill his mother? No sense]." But *ayal adichutello*? [But he did kill, didn't he?]

So we want to see, we want to admire, but we don't want to follow. This is the problem of spirituality – we are admiring, we are praising, we are learning; most of you as prefects are also teaching, but perhaps nobody is following for himself what you are teaching others. It is like a doctor telling his patient, "Don't smoke, because you can get cancer [puff-puff]. Don't smoke." And if you say, "Doctor, you are smoking," he says, "It is not your business. I will not get cancer because I take enough precautions," or some such rubbish. And three days later you find doctor So-and-so died of pulmonary cancer, oesophagus cancer, whatever it is.

So we always want to teach others what we don't want to practise. India is the greatest land in this world for this single reason that we are great preachers; we are no followers. Unless we learn to be followers without teaching anybody else, I don't think we will succeed, this nation will succeed, because the nation is only a group of people, a bunch of people, however large it may be. So when you follow, when you are obedient, when you practise what you are taught and preach, you are in some way contributing to the overall growth of the Indians and India. Every time you fail, another brick in the edifice has been removed.

So, you see, this is not an individual endeavour, for individual satisfaction, individual growth, individual achievement. Here the individual matters a great deal. It is not democracy in the sense that every vote is important. This is a spiritualocracy, if you want to call it that, where every soul matters. It is like a lake being made up of drops of water. Each drop is important. You cannot say the first drop is more important than the last. It is like the last straw on the camel's back when the camel's back was broken. Which was the last straw? The first straw cannot say, "No, no, I am, because I was first." It is one straw that broke the camel's back, and it could have been any one of these.




MASTER'S 75th BIRTH ANNIVERSARY
24th JULY-2002
FOOT ERS...

So that is the ultimate socialism in spirituality. Which of you is causing India's disgrace, disgraceful performance? "Not I," said the goose, "Not I," said the gander, in that famous children's story, *Who Killed Cock Robin?* Which of us is killing our great nation, our motherland as you call it (*matru bhoomi*)? All of us, because like the straw on the camel's back, the last straw may have been the one which collapsed it, but every one of the others is contributing. So please remember, spirituality is an individual enterprise, an individual endeavour, for a cosmic purpose. We must look upon a *Sahajlok* perhaps where Lalaji and Babuji are waiting to create a new loka – Sahajlok, and which will bless the universe as it is slowly peopled by liberated, elevated, divinised souls from here.

So don't take your Sahaj Marg abhyas lightly. Don't think you can, and you may not, and you need not. "What does it matter if I don't? I don't want to be in Sahaj Marg." Then you are another failure, another stone which is going to spoil that lake, spoil the prestige, spoil the fair name, spoil everything of our ancient culture, the Vedic tradition, the yogic path and, last but not least, our present motherland. So please take all this seriously. If you cannot be obedient even in the spiritual *sanstha* [system], how are you going to be obedient in public life? Can you be obedient in public life if you are not obedient here?

So I wish all of you will think over these things, make use of Sahaj Marg to that extent that you will all grow spiritually, become shining members in the Sahaj Marg firmament and become souls in the audience assembly hall of Babuji and Lalaji Maharaj where he will say, "Come, I was waiting for you." He should be able to say it now, not after a thousand years when we have taken three more janmas and then go to him, tottering and feeble. He will say, "What took you so long?" Don't you ask your son when he comes home late, "Why are you late? What took you so long?" "No, no, I had a special class." It may be true, it may be a lie, but nevertheless you are late and *acchan* [father] and *ammai* [mother], they are worried. "*Evede poyi ee kutti*? [Where did this child go?]" So don't be late. That can be the message for today.

Thank you for your hearing. I will take more opportunities to talk to you. Because, since I am not going to give you sittings, at least I should talk to you, because there may be another letter from somebody, "Why are you president of the Mission? Why did Babuji Maharaj nominate you? You are failing in your duty. You are not giving us transmission," et cetera, et cetera. I mean, you are at liberty to write. I will enjoy it.

Thank you.

6

A Call to Do Your Duty

Dear brothers and sisters,

This is the problem of talking to you openly and frankly – it is a problem of spiritual life. The spiritual law forbids *aadambaram*. You know what is aadambaram? Self-praise. Hindu culture is very insistent that a husband should not praise his wife, that parents should not praise their own children. In fact, self-praise is the worst; praise of your own is the next worst.

Of course, in modern culture, I know husband and wife, they have to keep praising each other, and in western countries you find this; even when the food is bad, the husband must say, "Oh darling, what wonderful food you cooked today!" He must smile so that she does not take it as some sort of innuendo or sarcastic comment; to reinforce it they must hug. They are always seeking praise because their own self-

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image is so awful. Any person who needs praise from outside is, *per se,* having a poor image of himself or herself, is very insecure and wants periodic bolstering of the self-image or the ego by praise from outside.

Of course, if you look at it in this light, God is the weakest, because we are always praising Him! *Abhishekapriya* [one who likes consecration], *stotrapriya* [one who likes verses in praise of himself], *bhojanapriya* [one who likes food] – what all we say of God! All lies and sins against God. In another religion it would be called blasphemy. God is stotrapriya! How can He be stotrapriya? We have in Sanskrit a term called *mukhastuti* – praising somebody to his face. It is normally supposed to be hypocritical and full of lies. So all our so-called *bhaktas* [devotees] who go to temples and pray and worship God in this way: "*Tvameva maata cha pitaa tvameva* [You alone are my mother and you alone are my father]" – all lies.

I don't know what God thinks of all this. [It is] a good thing He cannot communicate; a good thing He doesn't have a mind. I have always felt that God created Himself with no mind so that He does not have to evaluate the bhakta's *bhakti* [devotion], the bhakta's loyalty, the bhakta's so-called devotion – whether the bhakta is a bhakta at all. Because true bhaktas go to him, false bhaktas go to him, fraudulent bhaktas go to him, liars go to him, cheats go to him, robbers go and rob him – all in the name of God. So you see, this stotrapriya business is a corrupt practice; I don't know from where it came. And therefore, I believe that Hinduism in its practice of temple worship is essentially a corrupt thing. Who corrupts? Not God, of course; not the temple; *we* corrupt.

Similarly in the Mission: Master, Mission, method. Master – God, Mission – temple, method is the *paddhati*. There you have the *pooja paddhati* [ritualistic method]; here you have the *sadhana paddhati* [method of practice]. Here also we are being fraudulent towards our master, towards the high ones who created Sahaj Marg and left it for us. Praising (mukhastuti) when you are in front of him, and critical when you are away from him. "*Ayinakki yemi thelusiyya*? [What does he know?]" I have heard more or less in this voice, comments like that.

So, in Sahaj Marg we have brought the corruption of religion, and we are trying to throw away the purity of spirituality, with consequences of course, undeniably; with consequences which are unavoidable; with consequences I might say, inevitable. At least prefects should bring a pure mind, a pure heart with them. I am sorry to say, this is rarely the case.

I remember Babuji Maharaj in 1980, when he was more or less incarcerated in Paris in a room and not allowed freedom. He said, "People say they love me. All abhyasis say they love me." He was weeping actually, with tears in his eyes. He said, "But in the whole world maybe two or three persons love me."

That was Babuji's almost ending situation, because when we returned from Paris he went into a coma; all of you know the unhappy, tragic story. A man who established a Mission in 1945 and who lived for about thirty-seven years, only to have to say at the end of his life that "in this whole world nobody loves me; maybe only two or three. Nobody is obedient to me. Everybody is thinking he is already the president of the Mission." In Paris, August 1982 (August, September – the last four days of August, the first four days of September), these were his words.

I suppose history will always repeat itself. I do not know how Lalaji's *mahasamadhi* [the final samadhi, when a saint enters the Brighter World] came to him. Fortunately there was no organisation, there was no Mission that he had made and I don't think he had prefects, which was a great relief because my prefects are my problem. If a man takes a hundred sheep to graze, *he* is the man responsible for the sheep, upon whom the master depends; and if the sheep are missing, *he* is responsible. He could have sold three in the market and said the wolf has eaten them. He can say anything.

I remember once when we were in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1972 – I think it was July or August – one morning I was sitting with Babuji, side by side on the bed, and he suddenly looked at me and said, "Lalaji says, 'Do not become too dependent on Parthasarathi.'" I mean, I am telling you the truth. I said, "Why? You are not dependent on me. I am dependent on you." He said, "I am telling you, it is a mutual dependence. But I should not feel dependent on you." And the truth of this is in a story I read about a great saint who was struggling in the desert, hungry for forty days, thirsty for about a week, almost dying. He was shouting to God to give him some water. He saw a traveller on a camel, and the traveller said, "Swamiji, why is it that you are shouting like this?" He said, "I am thirsty, my son. Can you give me some water?" So the man got down, took out his water bottle, filled a cup, and when he looked down, the Swamiji was dying and his body was stinking. And he prayed to God, "What is this? He was one of your great saints. This is his end? How can it be?" So a voice from heaven said, "So long, he depended on me. When he depends on you, this is what happens to him."

So in a sense, when I depend on my prefects to do good work, to do honest work, to do faithful work, I have made a mistake. Because, maybe I was withdrawing from the work a little, expecting *you* would do it. I don't mean only you but all the prefects all over the world. Maybe I shifted my dependence from my master to prefects, and I am paying the price in my own way!

So, in future, I shall not depend on prefects. Of course, I expect that you will work – because that is a matter for you and your conscience. I know there are many here who don't work at all. I don't want to insult them or harm them before all of you by giving names. There are many of you who have divided loyalties – praising one master here, going to another fellow and calling him *devuda* [God]. I mean it is almost rampant. If I am to look for a totally dedicated, one- pointed (*ekagra*) abhyasi or prefect, I may find a few. I *may* find a few. Of course all this expectation is my fault; it is not your fault. So I cannot blame you for something which you did not expect that I should expect.

Now I think the fault is that there have been too many prefects made in a hurry, because here is a centre, there is a centre, with no prefect, only abhyasis, and so the organisation has grown somewhat haphazardly, without my being able to really attend to the work of making prefects. And when there are seven prefects where there should be only two perhaps, or even one, there are of course ego problems, power problems, and instead of brotherhood, there is brotherlessness. There is fighting, there are arguments; the organisation eventually suffers. I am requesting all zonal secretaries to review their prefects' list and cut down the prefects' strength by as much as half, if that is possible.

I remember in Babuji Maharaj's day, we had our *patrika* [magazine] – *Sahaj Marg* – and we used to print the names of the prefects in that magazine. Sometimes there were twenty, twenty-four; of course the number of abhyasis was also less than one percent of what it is today. But Babuji once told me, "If you have one servant, he will work well, because he is the only one. He knows he has to do the work. You know he has to do the work. And you know when it is done, he has done it. More important, when it is not done, he has not done it. Now when you have too many servants, you can neither assign praise for work done, because everybody wants it, nor apportion blame for work not done, because everybody denies it." Even Babuji Maharaj told me as early as 1972, "I made a big mistake when I created a second prefect in any centre, because when there was one prefect he was faithful, he was honest, he *had* to work. When there are two prefects, *I* have to work." I am quoting Babuji Maharaj. If Krishnarjuna Rao had been vigilant, he might have heard something like this, because already the trouble had begun in his time. The trouble began with prefects. Ramjibhai, one of the old cronies of Babuji Maharaj from his early days, fighting with his son Prakash, creating or threatening to create disturbance in the Basant Panchami celebration; so many things happened. Much water has flowed under the bridge, as they say, but the seeds have been there forty years ago, fifty years ago.

I used to say jokingly to Babuji Maharaj that *sannyasa* [renunciation] is better, because you don't have to do anything to provide for a family, for a wife, for children; to go home running and lock up and this and that. You are able to be more centred upon your Mission, your method, your work as a prefect or a preceptor. Babuji said, "Yes, but.also sannyasa has *its* problems, because he is thinking, 'Why don't I have a wife? Why should I be a sannyasi? What about the *kalatra anubhava*?'" (I think Osho calls it *sambhoga* [bodily enjoyment].) What about that? Sannyasis want.

So no life can be perfect, whether you are a sannyasi or a saint or an ordinary citizen living a public life or a farmer – it doesn't matter. If it is to be perfect, *you* have to make it perfect. Perfection is *made*. We have to *work* to make things perfect. God gave us food grains, but they were scattered here and there two thousand years ago, three thousand years ago. Then agriculture became a possibility when people saw that when you sowed seeds you got a crop many times as big. Till then they were just plucking and eating. They realised the secret that only when you sow a seed you can have a crop, a harvest. Agriculture came like that.

So from a plant feeding one man, when they could sow a seed or seeds in a small patch of garden like this, it could feed a family. When they put seeds in a few acres of land, it could feed a whole village. God gives the seed; we have to make it grow, we have to make it prosper, we have to make it flourish and multiply. That is why in the Bible, when God created human beings he said, "Go forth and multiply." Multiply what? They think they, themselves – the family should have more children. Some religions have interpreted it that way. So they have twenty-eight children, thirty children, because God said, "Go forth and multiply." I believe he said multiply what you see in front of you. Multiply the goodness, multiply the trees, the *vanaspati* [plants], the *aushadha* [medicine from plants], *vana* [forest]. When we multiply ourselves and have twenty-eight children, it is selfish – a selfish interpretation of God's command, "Go forth and multiply."

So you see, every command is open to misinterpretation, misapplication, and it all points towards selfishness, self-centredness. And "God is wonderful!" because, "You see what a wonderful God! I can have twenty-eight children without problems because now *He* has to feed them. I am only following His command. He said go forth and multiply; I am multiplying. Whose responsibility is it to look after them? Obviously it is God's. I am only an obedient servant." So they don't work. "God will provide."

Here also we sit. "Master does the work." Something which should be a praise of the master, gratitude to the master, that like using an iron pipe, pure water is being delivered to the village twenty-five miles away. That is gratitude. But if you allow the pipe to rust and rot and you don't replace it and say, "He must provide water. It is his responsibility," who will die of thirst and starvation? The people with misplaced faith, people who have expectations they should not have, people who shirk their duty, people who are lazy, idle and useless. Therefore Swami Vivekananda said, "Give me men of passion." It is a surprising statement. He said, "Give me men of passion." Passion is like horsepower in an engine. What will you do with a one-horsepower locomotive pulling a train with twenty-seven carriages behind it? It cannot even start. Similarly, passion in a human being is a highly motivating force in any direction – the direction you have to choose and put that power to use. If you want to live a life of ribald pleasure, it will benefit you in that direction. If you want to get drunk and play cards and cheat, with that also the passion will help you. If you turn it towards *urdhva gati* [path of advancement], it will help you. The same power works; the direction you choose. Of course, Master gives the power, but *utilisation* you have to do. No? "*Kadhu, kadhu* [No, no] Sir, great Master. He gives us power, he gives us work – and miracle! He is doing it himself. Let us have coffee!" This is the attitude of prefects. Why? Because of this single mistake of making too many prefects.

I can straight away cut out two-thirds of you and not affect my work at all, because they don't do any work. In any assembly of prefects, two-thirds I can just remove like that, and I know whom to remove also. The tragedy is this confusion of discipline with love; that where love exists, there should be no discipline. You expect that you should never be chastised, you should never be corrected, you should never be pulled up, because then you are hurt. And you say, "What? What is my mistake? I have not done anything wrong." Well, you have not done anything wrong because you have done nothing. As Babuji Maharaj used to say, "A dead man cannot be blamed for anything because he can do nothing." Only living people make mistakes – and the mistake also is that you are not working where you should be working. That is a big mistake. But I cannot criticise. "Babuji Maharaj was so kind, so loving. He never criticised, Sir, he always praised." Of course, but fortunately he was like a shepherd with two cows. I have two thousand bulls and that is a big mistake. A herd of cattle which we cannot manage, we should dispose of. I have no grazing grounds to feed them, no grass, no money to buy hay with. How can I sustain?

So the trouble is with me, not with you. I cannot blame you at all. You are only following your human nature. You are happy to have a certificate; it is nice to be called prefect. Some people are even having their feet touched and are even more happy. "*Vodhu, vodhu, vodhu,*" *ante* [saying, "No, no."] It is a *naatakam* [pretense]. Inside they *want* it done.

So, I am the creator of my problems. As Babuji Maharaj said, "Everyone creates his or her own problems and you must find some solution within yourself." So I have been seeking solutions within myself for my problems which I have created. I can blame nobody else. Similarly you are also having problems which you have created. What are the problems you have created? That you think Sahaj Marg is easy; that a prefect need not work because the master is always working; that a prefect is entitled to respect and regard from the abhyasis; in some cases, that a prefect is even entitled to gifts, et cetera, et cetera.

So my problems are mine, your problems are yours, and it looks as if the two cannot be reconciled. But I have been offering a way of reconciling yourself to your predicament by repeatedly emphasising that prefects who don't want to work should honourably return their certificates and say, "*Ayya* [Sir], I cannot work. I do not know how to do it. And I don't want this work also because I want to be a good abhyasi and reach my destination. Why this nonsense of being a prefect? I am not here to serve others. I want to be served. You are here to serve me." Return the certificate – that is an honourable way. What is the dishonourable way? To hold on to the certificate, waiting to be sacked, and when you are sacked, to be angry, and when you are too angry you leave the Mission and criticise it from outside, and so on.

Now I must commend an action that the prefects of Madras took on their own. When I had these problems and I told the assembly here some things which I don't want to repeat, they met on their own and they decided that all of them would return their certificates so that the president could be free to select a new team, retaining some of them, retaining all of them or retaining none of them as he chose. I found it quite encouraging that at last my prefects, my preceptors, are beginning to think in the right way. It is the first step. Subsequent steps I hope will follow. Like a car, you have to keep your foot on the accelerator if the car is to move. They should not just lapse into some form of somnolence and say, "We have done our bit, we have surrendered our certificates. If he now returns it, he is a fool, because we have given him the opportunity." So, for me it is also again a predicament which I don't like – who to keep, who not to keep. Because even though they have voluntarily surrendered their certificates, all those whose prefect certificates I don't return to them are going to feel terribly annoyed, angry. "We voluntarily gave, ayya, what is the meaning of this? If he is a gentleman should he not return it? Is it not proof of my devotion and loyalty?" I am sure this reaction is going to come. And the people who will deny it now are the people who will do it later.

Like Peter at the last supper, when Christ said, "Before the cock crows twice, thou shalt deny me thrice." And Peter was stunned because he thought he was the *prathama shishya* [primary disciple] of Jesus. And it happened the next morning! Christ was arrested, taken away. Peter was following at a distance. The Roman soldiers asked him, "Are you his follower?" He said, "No, I am not." First denial. Two more followed. One cock crowed halfway through, and by the time he finished his third denial, the cock crowed again. "Before the cock crows twice, thou shalt deny me thrice." And of the twelve disciples he said, "One among you shall sell me for thirty pieces of silver." I mean my quotation may be wrong, but as far as I can remember he said, "One among you will sell me for thirty pieces of silver," and Judas Iscariot, his disciple, betrayed him for thirty pieces of silver.

So the great saints have known what is going to happen, but it does not prevent the shock, the sorrow, when it happens. We all know that we are all going to die. Every man here knows that he is going to die; every woman knows she is going to die; but yet when death comes it is a shock, a profound shock. And we curse God. "What is this? Why did you create us if you are going to destroy us like this?" He is not destroying. We are creating ourselves, we are destroying ourselves, by doing and thinking what we should not. We are here because we thought ourselves into being here. We are here as what we are because we thought ourselves into what we have to be here, so that we could attain liberation in this life. But unfortunately desire comes, *kama* as we say; not the sex, but kama in the sense of desire, and it spoils the whole thing. So the soul which created its life here with a particular purpose, in particular geographical and commercial and other orientations, suffers and loses its way again, because desire comes in between.

Similarly for prefects – who were honest before they started to work and got the certificate – desire comes. Desire for praise, desire for fame, and in many cases desire even to be in the position of the master, and that has disastrous consequences, not only for them but for everybody. Because one Ravana could spoil a whole Lanka, isn't it? One *asura* or one *raakshasa* [demons] was enough to create total chaos in a society.

Two terrorists yesterday in Gandhi Nagar in Gujarat were responsible for the killing of sixty-five to seventy people before they were killed themselves. And so much commotion, so much expense. Local commandos, NSG commandos from Delhi, Lal Krishna Advani rushing to Gujarat – I don't know what he was supposed to do there; must have spent crores of rupees yesterday. Two terrorists! So one wrong thought, one bad thought corrupts our whole life. Ravana destroyed himself like that. Kamsa destroyed himself like that. Shishupala destroyed himself like that. One cannot blame the *avatara* [incarnation] of God, whether it was Rama or Krishna; they were doing their duty. We are all responsible for the situation that we create for ourselves, for the misery that we have to undergo; and so when it comes to re-forming society in the sense of re-creating a society, it is a common responsibility of all of us.

Now it is my request that Sahaj Marg as a society – not as a registered society, as a society (as a *samudaaya*), as a *samuha* {community} – has to be recreated, re-established on firm foundations, and this has to be a cooperative effort. The master, from his spiritual world, can do so many things, but if he has to work here, he has to come in a material form. That is why he said, "*Yadaa yadaa hi dharmasya glaanir bhavati* {Whenever dharma is threatened, I arrive}," because to work in the world, he must assume a material form. From there he can do so many wonderful things. He can create worlds. He can destroy them. But he cannot *transform* what he has created.

As Babuji Maharaj said, "Lord Rama came; of course he killed the raakshasas – from Ravana, everybody, you see. But how many people did he change? What transformation did he achieve? His own *dhobi* {washerman} was the cause of Sita's departure from the world. Krishna came. What did he do? Could he change even Shishupala? Could he change the minds of Duryodhana and the Kauravas? No!" If God has to seek recourse only in destruction, what is the power of God?

So, when the ultimate limit of disobedience, vice, avarice – when it comes, even God has no choice except to destroy. Of course Krishna repeatedly says, "It is the last weapon in the hands of the right." One should not resort to war or destruction until there is nothing else available. So please understand that I am *also* like that. I am not a Krishna by any means, but I too have postponed taking disciplinary action, postponed year after year hoping that people will change, and when it becomes inevitable, I have only one choice, and that is the choice I am putting before you now: zonal secretaries to prune the number of prefects in their zones, for the good of everybody – for the good of the Mission, for the good of the abhyasis, I would say even for the good of India.

So I request all of you to remember that you are not working for yourself. You are working for a whole society, for a world, for perhaps the cosmic Creator Himself. Because we can either help or hinder; there is no third possibility. Idleness is also hindering. If I have to employ ten workers where two are enough, the eight are useless. I could as well put them to sleep and wake them at intervals and give them the food, so that at least they don't corrupt the two good workers. That is simple labour policy. If you have more than you need, there is always waste. Ten workers where two are enough – nobody will work; because the two will say, "Why? Eight people are not working, they are paid. Why should I work?" So communism starts, naxalism starts. The eight people don't say, "They are working, let us also work." But the two people say, "Eight are not working, they are paid. Why should we have to work?"

So a topsy-turvy situation has come into being in our Mission – what should I say, a top-heavy administration has come into being. Too many prefects, too many preceptors; so there is chaos,

there is unrest, there is disharmony. There are power problems, ego problems. And Andhra Pradesh is of course not free of these problems – has never been. We know the problems that existed in Hyderabad. We know the problems that are continuing to exist in Vijayawada. I am referring also to the legal problems which my legal council there does not apparently attend to with expedition, though I am repeatedly assured that he is in personal control of the situation.

On all fronts there is room for disappointment, discouragement, and perhaps if the situation is not rectified then – as I repeatedly say – if Babuji Maharaj were alive, I would offer my resignation and go away. My problem is that I have nobody to whom I can submit my resignation. I wish that the old man was there and I could just go to him and tell him, "What sort of Mission are you running? Keep your certificate." I cannot do it, because there is no way of giving my certificate back or resigning from the president-ship of the Mission, much as I would like to. I tell you, this is a very serious thing. I am not just using words to beguile you. I have been thinking like this ever since Babuji Maharaj attained mahasamadhi, how I got into this fix.

I joined the Mission in 1964. From 1967 when I became a prefect, a preceptor, my father warned me again and again. He said, "You stupid ass, you are getting deeper and deeper into the mud." I don't know what you call it in Telugu, this wet mud in the monsoon – *goobi*. "You are going deeper and deeper into the goobi. One day this old man is going to put the Mission on your head and go away," and it happened. And I know that my father was right. But, you know, when your feet are up to here in the goobi, it is easy to pull out, though sometimes when you press this one, this one goes more in deep. When it is up to here [hip level], you need help. When it is up to here [the neck], nobody can help you. So I am stuck. And this is not a goobi, it is a quicksand. So I am in the quicksand, my head is gone. So I am in the very, what should I say, desperate situation of not being able to get out of a situation into which I voluntarily entered.

I remember when I was made a prefect, it was at ten o'clock at night. Nobody knew I was going to be made a prefect. Babuji called me into his room and I thought he was going to give me an individual sitting. And he ended up by making me a prefect. I said, "But you didn't ask for my permission." He said "Oh, I am sorry. I did not know I needed your permission. But you know, you are Lalaji's choice." I said, "I cannot ask Lalaji, but I can ask you." He said, "Why should we have your permission?" I said, "In company matters, when I am appointed a director in one of my companies, they take my written permission that I am willing to serve as a director. At least that courtesy the Mission should have done to me." Anyway, then deeper and deeper – I became a full preceptor, I became secretary. And I knew that I was getting too deep. Because what was taking me deeper and deeper into this situation? – My work. I worked for the Mission. I don't know whether it was good or bad – he knows; but I worked. And now my work became my enemy. So you are all happy; if you don't work you are happy. None of you will face my situation! But what to do?

It is like these tap roots of big trees. There is a law in botany that the tap root goes as far deep as the crown of the tree goes up in the atmosphere. If this is forty feet tall, the tap root must go forty feet down. So as my work was becoming deeper and deeper, perhaps I was being taken up spiritually. But we only see this problem. I am not cognizant or aware of the spiritual heights that I am supposed to be having and enjoying the bliss of, because if you have a room full of roses, a small piece of dead fish will destroy that atmosphere – a small piece. Similarly all the beauty and the glory and the bliss of a spiritual life are destroyed by small matters of indiscipline in the Mission. You cannot have both. You cannot sit in bliss and ignore this, because unfortunately the president of Shri Ram Chandra Mission is not only a functionary in the public life sphere, with administrative duties, responsibilities; he is also, shall we say, the shepherd of his flock.

If you see other *mattas* [monasteries], the *mattatipati* [the head of the monastery] just has his *pooja* and *praarthana* [prayer] and what not. Administration is managed by somebody else. I asked Babuji, "Why have you done this? Should it not be separate?" He said, "In Sahaj Marg, I *believe* that my people will work faithfully. All that they have to bring is willingness to work; ability I give them." I said, "Wonderful," but we see the result. Babuji was disappointed, to the extent that I can tell you this as a fact – that he left this mortal world and went into mahasamadhi a full quarter of a century before he said he would go. He told me personally several times that he would be here with us at least until 2006. Four years more [from now] – but he passed away in '83. And he went because he was fed up with his life. His last words, more or less, in Paris to me were, "With what face shall I present myself to Lalaji Maharaj?" I said, "Why do you ask such a question?" He said, "Because I have said 'yes' to every stupid proposal put up to me. I have agreed with everything with which I should not have agreed. And instead of being subjected to *muhabbat* [love], I have subjected myself to *murrabat* [compulsion]."

And it's a fact, Krishnarjuna Rao should know at least, that in the last two, three years of his life he [Babuji] was a slave in his house. He was under the compulsion of several people who made him sign documents, papers. So with this situation, like in the Gita, Lord Krishna says, "Where is peace in this world? (*Ashaantasya kuthah sukham?*)" So I've not come to give you any message. I have only come to place before you my feelings, my predicament and my, I don't say fears, but my concern for the future of this Mission. Because I can truly say I know this Mission inside out. Like a child growing, I have grown in this Mission and I know every fact, every nook and corner of this Mission; and if this is *my* predicament, what will a man, who comes into this position after me, know? How will he deal with problems? How will he correlate with people? What is going to happen to the Mission? If all of you are *really* honourable, true lovers of the master, dedicated workers of the Mission, this will not happen. Because he may or may not know the facts of the Mission or the people of the Mission, or even where ashrams are. I am sure my successor may not know where the ashrams of the Mission are. He need not, because you will all support him.

So you see, the prefects are a very potent, a very powerful group of people who carry the responsibility of retaining the Mission in its future as it was meant to be. If you fail in that duty, the Mission fails. So don't think that you are only to give two sittings to one abhyasi once a week, and you can say, "No, no! Whatever I could do I did." It is not 'whatever I can do I did'; I have to do everything I have to do. Are you not slaving for money in your offices, in your companies, in your businesses, as clerks, as managing directors – are you not slaving? Are there not shopkeepers among you who open their shop at seven o'clock in the morning and keep it open till ten o'clock hoping to sell a kilo of rice to the next customer? Are there not textile dealers who sit similarly from seven to ten waiting for somebody to buy a sari or a dhoti or a towel? And you are able to do it. Why? Because you get a few rupees, few *annas,* whatever it is. In your working life outside Sahaj Marg, if you are sitting in a shop or a place of business for ten hours, you have hardly one hour of real work. But here, where in the Mission we have ten hours of work, we don't even do one hour of work. So it is very clear.

I repeat that the future of the Mission depends not so much on the guru or the master or whatever you want to call him, but on the workers of the Mission. Political science says it is true. If the party is unsound, the party is full of corrupt people, that party is a corrupt party and it is doing no good to the country. No use blaming the leader of the party. So, I am putting squarely on your shoulders the responsibility for the future of the Mission in this world. Those of you who think you can manage honourably to do your own part – like this roof is built with all these columns supporting it, are you able to hold up the Mission? We are all praising Lord Krishna as Govardhana Giridhari. What are we doing? Are we at least lifting our own little load? Every man, every human being, every woman must take a share in this work, in the cosmic work. After all we are beneficiaries of the cosmic goodness, cosmic love. Should we not, out of gratitude, return *something* to that cosmic source of what we have received?

So it is a call to expect your gratitude to the creator of this Mission, by practising his method faithfully, by looking on the Mission as your own property, and defending it, protecting it, making it grow, and keeping the name of the master, his memory, intact, more and more glorious in the future than it has been in the past – all this is our duty. I know people who have no education. They suddenly become very rich. Nobody in their family even remembers who their father was, who their grandfather was. But the first thing you see in the one-crore building they have made is the photograph of their father and mother painted in oils. Why? "No, no, sir, my parents..." So what about the *parampitaa* {eternal Father} as you call him here? What about my gratitude to Him? Remember what Babuji said: "There are no vices and virtues, no sins in Sahaj Marg." He said, "*If* there is a sin in Sahaj Marg, it is ingratitude towards the master."

So I request all of you to think over what I have said today. Don't think over it emotionally and say, "What did this fellow talk? Nonsense!" Think over it calmly, as something said to you for *your* good, for the good of the Mission in which you are; because, like any house, if you are sleeping in it and if you don't look after it, if it collapses, you will die under that debris. So the collapse of the Mission will be the collapse of all of us. The breakdown of discipline in the Mission will be like terrorists destroying life. And if you are just idle and say, "Well, I am only an observer," we have to say like Lord Krishna said at one stage: In this war there can be no neutrality. You are either on the side of good or, if you are not, you are *ipso facto* on the side of evil.

Thank you. I pray for all of you. Please consider my words and do what you think you should be doing. Biksham-*gaaru* will give, I hope, a good translation, it being a long talk. I didn't expect to talk so long, but I only made a few points. He can tell you that.

7

Only Obedience

Respected Sarnadji and all my other sisters and brothers,

Welcome to this workshop of prefects and preceptors – of Karnataka, basically, but including people like myself. It is unfortunate that a linguistic division of this country continues to cast its evil shadow upon our country, causing not only linguistic division but political division and even division of water. I am happy that today Karnataka and Tamil Nadu are sitting together in this hall, because I have read frightening reports of what happened to Tamil Nadu registered cars in Karnataka during the farmers' agitation when water had to be let out from the Cauvery. This shows that any division is dangerous – whether it is political, religious, linguistic, caste, colour, sex, anything. Any division based on anything, or anything which

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9 November 2002, Chennai, India

causes a division, must be viewed as dangerous and we should resist it with all our capacity, with all the force of conviction that divisive forces are always troublesome, dangerous and destructive.

I hope, like so many lessons we learn from rivers, that the Cauvery will teach us this lesson, that neighbours are unfortunately the bitterest enemies. You find this in village level politics; your neighbour and you cannot get on though you have been living together for the last fifty years, because your lands are adjacent to each other. When your land is watered, his land is not watered – things like that. I hope in future we will have conferences, workshops, of prefects and not of states.

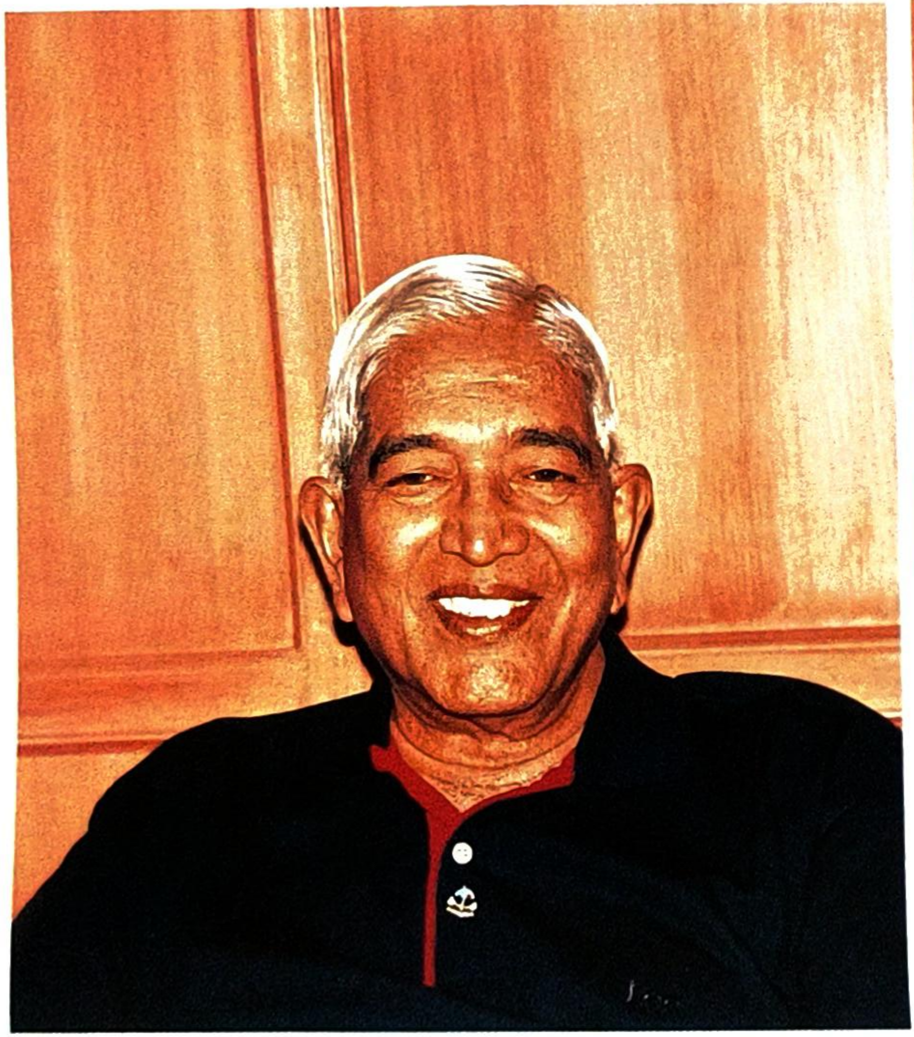
The second division that I wish to talk about is between prefects and abhyasis. Babuji Maharaj, in his ultimate wisdom, told us that when someone asked him why non-abhyasis don't become abhyasis, he said it is because the prefect thinks that the other man is a non-abhyasi. You have created a barrier between yourself and the person sitting opposite you. What does it matter to you whether he is an abhyasi or not? You do your work. This division is very dangerous in Sahaj Marg. Of course, I cannot suggest that we have open meetings of 20,000 people. That is for professional reasons, reasons of work, reasons of teaching what we have to do; we have to bring prefects together, but it does not mean we are not abhyasis. Babuji Maharaj always emphasised that we should think of ourselves as abhyasis, because you may be a prefect to an abhyasi, but to yourself you are not a prefect. He has said this so many times – a father is a father to his son, not to himself. You don't go about beating your breast and saying, "I am a father." Maybe when you have your first child, yes. The wonder that the situation evokes – that you, a puny human being, could have produced something as beautiful as the baby – may provoke some wonder, some pride, but that is a natural reaction to a natural situation.

I feel that often our work is impeded, made more and more difficult, because prefects think they are prefects. There is an old adage that the best government is no government. Or to put it in its right way, "No government is the best government." Think over it. Any country which has a government or which needs a government, which needs a police force, which needs legal structures, is a poor country. The more hospitals in a country, the more the sickness; the more police, the more the lawlessness; the more lawyers, the more the illegalities. So we should understand that some things are meant to proliferate, to grow in number, and some are not. An ideal country should have no government, no courts, no police stations, no lawyers – only spiritual abhyasis; no master, no slave, no prefect, no abhyasi – all are spiritual. I do not know if such a society will ever come into existence, but that should not prevent us from trying, in our own humble way, to create a society around ourselves, where we can say, at least here I have a group where there is no division based on any factor which normally governs human beings outside this ashram. I look forward to that day. Of course I will not see it, but even if my son sees it, my grandson sees it, it would be a very proud day. After all, my grandfather did not live to see us here. It does not matter, but from wherever he is, if he is a spiritually elevated person, surely he is able to see and to be happy about it.

"The evil that men do lives after them," said Shakespeare – what I would like to say, because I am afraid of contradiction by Rajagopalan, who is a scholar! The evil that men do lives after them, in a spiritual sense, because our samskaras live after us, what we do lives after us. We may not live, but what we do lives after us. So if you want to live eternally in a very real sense, Babuji Maharaj said, like the foundation of a good house, we should be forgotten. Foundations are dug, are built very strongly and then covered over and walls are built; what you see are the walls and the roof; you don't see the foundation. Any culture, any tradition, any system must have the foundation covered, invisible but yet very much there, supporting the superstructure which is going to come upon it, higher and higher, higher and higher. Are we building such a foundation?

In Sahaj Marg we have this tradition that we don't build structures. We go on building the foundation, stronger and stronger, and some day the superstructure will emerge. Nobody can say his work is complete. We can see that it is not complete, because work is never complete. This is not a building that we are building, about which we can say, Now it is over; it is not a temple we are building, that with the *brahmotsava* [grand annual temple festival] it is over; it is not a child that we are producing, that with the delivery it is finished. This is something that is going on, on, on for eternity; and therefore it is, in a sense, never complete. But please also understand that if today's work is not done, tomorrow's work will not be done. That is how great systems have collapsed, great organisations have collapsed, great religions are collapsing, and I hope they will collapse soon, especially our own. Because to my mind the Hindu religion is the greatest enemy of spirituality. As Babuji Maharaj himself said when I asked him a question, "Why are the others outside India so proficient, so effective, so growth-oriented – politically, economically?" He said it is because they have one mind – *one* mind. No channels in the mind which will divert it and distribute its power into 2,000 deities and sub-deities and minor deities. *One* mind.

Let us remember this when we talk of our neighbouring countries and their religions, that their minds are far more powerful than ours, whatever the cruelty may be that they indulge in. Often they are political lies told to us by our own government. One



mind. Here in this hall you have probably fifty different minds. Somebody is a Brahmin and a Vaishnav, and not to stop with that, he is 'U' – not you, 'U' [referring to the caste mark on the forehead]. And somebody is a Brahmin and a Vaishnava with a 'Y'. And then, of course, others are Brahmins with bars across their forehead. Subdivided into four castes, you see what a shame is our country! How scandalously we have managed to divide God between ourselves, though nobody has God, nobody is godly, nobody worships God. I think, in a very real sense, the old saying, "Thou shalt not worship God and Mammon," is true of India, because we don't worship God; today we worship only Mammon, *only* Mammon. So caste must go. If caste has to go, religion has to go.

I was recently on a long tour of the Himalayas, following the river Ganga and the Alakananda, looking for a place where we could build an ashram, with the idea that millions of pilgrims pass that way. Perhaps if even one out of a lakh of pilgrims is attracted to spirituality, we could serve them. I did not find the place; it doesn't exist. Because the Ganga is so, what should I say – I hesitate to say it – it has polluted the Indian spiritual mind with so devastating an effectiveness, and with so permanent, perhaps, an effect on the psyche of the average Indian, the Hindu, that we can never overcome the Ganga. I am happy to say I did not have a bath in that river. Babuji might have been very upset. Babuji has himself stated that one day the Ganga will be dammed and the river will not flow, and perhaps thereafter the Hindu will wake up and wonder, "Now what should I do? Where is my Ganga in which I can put my sins and walk out free, walk out pure, walk out clean?" Such a river doesn't exist. Even externally today most of the Ganga will make you more impure when you come out than when you went in – even externally – so filthy.

So you see, the Hindu mind has been trained to have faith in all the wrong things, without recognising the basic underlying principle of purity that should pervade; without emphasising and teaching us how to purify ourselves without having to run to a river or to a temple; without insisting that God is within you, He is you, or you are part of Him. Why do you run hither and thither to worship, being fleeced on the way by every operator that you can find – corrupt priests, filthy temples, insulted gods and goddesses who themselves have to be bathed and purified every morning? I mean, look at the travesty that the Hindu religion has become. I am not denying that the Vedic truths are eternal, immortal, divine. I cannot deny for a moment that the Upanishads – as one of the famous German scholars put it (Schopenhauer, I think) – are sublime, not merely in their effectiveness, their truth, their poetic truth, their poetic way of presenting truth, but in the beauty which fills the soul when you read them; the longing which comes into your heart to be something like what they say you should become. Our temples only make us more, what shall I say, material minded. We go there to ask for more and more, as Babuji said. Prayer is begging, and we only beg in the temples, and even in that begging we are not sincere.

I have a feeling that the entire bribery and corruption business in our Hindu societies began with this question of offering *dakshina* [token of gratitude] in temples. If even gods have to be bribed, what about poor human beings? It is unfortunate, because I love my religion; I have been a practicant, a sincere practicant of my religion till I came to Babuji Maharaj's divine feet. I have managed to scratch the surface of Vedic lore; I love it. But the way it is practised, it is a shame. And our prefects must at least learn to practise what they preach. It is no use sanctimoniously telling our abhyasis, or new abhyasis as you call them, "We do not recommend temple worship," and after the sitting you go to a Lingayat temple, or Devanga temple, or Vishnu temple, or Shiva temple yourself, and say, "What to do, sir? My wife will not permit me to stop this." Integrity is *lacking*. Integrity means being one. It comes from the word 'integer' in mathematics. One, I am one. I am not divided against myself. Because one divided by any figure – if it is divided by two, it becomes half; you increase the figure, it becomes a smaller and smaller fraction. So I am divided against myself by so-called religious practices, social requirements, obligations to family, and whatever else you may like to add to it. So we are not whole persons; there is no wholesomeness in us. We are all divided folk, preaching for the sake of others, practising (if at all) some things for our own sake; that too surreptitiously, telling lies at home. Till when can we survive like this?

So a prefect's workshop must not just stop with cleaning. And you know, I have heard too much of this, nauseatingly, too many times repeated – techniques of cleaning, techniques of meditation, techniques of whatever you have. How not to touch somebody's feet, how to touch somebody's feet if you are compelled to do it, even though it is against discipline. I wish to emphasise that we need only one thing in our spiritual lives. It is not *bhakti* [devotion], it is not love, it is not *shraddha* [dedication], it is not sadhana [practice], it is not cleaning; it is only, and only, *obedience*. If obedience is lacking, all your sadhana is not going to take you anywhere. If the master says in his wisdom, "Don't do it," don't do it. "Now, why should I not do it? After all, Babuji himself has said he only passed fifth or sixth class. Is he competent to advise me?"

The moment you question the master, your spirituality is lost. I repeat, if you want to knock on the doors of the Brighter World and find Babuji Maharaj opening them, obey; forget practice, forget cleaning, obey. He says, "Prefect must give sitting," give sittings. Don't pretend to give sittings. Don't just sit there and close your eyes and think of so many other things. Don't hide in your house and close the door and say, "Say I am not here today." I have received complaints about many prefects who avoid abhyasis, who give them the appointments and are not there on time, or when they come, they say, "Sorry, today I am not able to do it. Please come tomorrow." Babuji Maharaj said, "God is the only person who can say, 'Come tomorrow,' because He knows He is there and He knows you will be there. Nobody else can know who will be there tomorrow." So if you want to be obedient, give a sitting to whoever comes when they come, assuming you are there, that you are not in your office. And especially if you have made a commitment, fulfil it, because your time is not the only valuable time; the abhyasi's time is also valuable – to him.

So a good prefect must not evade his responsibilities. He has voluntarily accepted. And I repeat, we don't need these techniques and technologies and so many things we are touting around as spirituality. We need only to obey. There is too much esoteric paraphernalia that has become attached to Sahaj Marg. What is love without obedience? Can it exist at all? Think over it. What is dedication worth if there is no obedience? "No, no sir, I am dedicated to spirituality but..." This word 'but' must not enter the dictionary of a

Sahaj Margi. "I am willing to give you a sitting, sir, but come next Friday" – *gaya* [gone]. So please, all of you write on your hearts one word: Obey. Don't tell it to abhyasis; you be obedient. It is for yourself. "I must obey." What? Whatever I am told to obey. And this, simple people are able to do. That is why Babuji was always praising simple people and he was always so, shall I say, critical of educated and intellectual people, because the educated, intellectual people are always questioning. Because one attribute of intellect and education seems to be the ability to question and to continue to question, perhaps eternally. They will be questioning; they will never do anything else.

You people are not expected to question. If you question – I mean you have a right to question, but will it serve your spiritual purpose? Will it take you on your road to the Brighter World? That, you better think over before you question, because obedience and questions are opposite to each other. The only question you can perhaps ask is, "How should I do it?" "Give a sitting." "Babuji, how do I give a sitting?" It is permitted – once. "Babuji, when should I give a sitting?" Permitted question – only once. "How should I give a sitting?" "Do what I am doing. Sit down, close your eyes and say, 'Please start.' *It* starts. *It* starts; you don't start." "When should I give a sitting?" "Do what I am doing. When the abhyasi comes, I say '*Baithiye.* [Please sit.]'" I am referring to my master of course, and he gives a sitting. "Why should I give a sitting?" That question is not permitted; you have to give it because you are a prefect. "Where should I give a sitting?" Does not matter.

So you see, we have no questions in Sahaj Marg. We are not supposed to ask questions in our own interest. We are only supposed to obey and, as our obedience develops, questions drop. Ultimately you are like an answering machine in a telephone system. You become a conduit. Duty, performance of duty, becomes automatic, something not dependant on your will and pleasure. "I will do it only when I can. I will do it only when I must."

So you see, we have no freedom, in this sense that my fundamental liberty to ask questions is taken away at one shot! And it should be taken away at one shot; it should have been taken away at one shot had you been a devoted abhyasi. The first time you went to the master, you forgot yourself, you ceased to exist; then who will ask questions? So the ability to do work and to obey without asking questions, the increasing ability, is also a sign of increasing, shall we say, surrender. "The less and less I ask, the more and more I get," we can say, in what could have been Babuji's own language. The more and more I ask, the less and less I get. The less and less I ask questions, the more and more it indicates my surrender, the closer and closer I become to him. Ultimately, this mergence – now He, not I – what is written about

Babuji Maharaj as having been said by Lalaji Maharaj: "When you have ceased to exist, and you have become me and I have become you."

So this is all that I have to say. And I have a small story which I am sure all of you know, about Radha, Lord Krishna and the flute. Radha was perhaps jealous of the flute. She asked Krishna, "This flute is so dear to you. It is always with you, it is in touch with you. And it is the one object your lips touch most often, your own divine lips. Why?" I think she asked that question only once. Krishna gave her the flute and said, "Look into it. What do you see?" Radha said, "Nothing." He said, "Therefore it is dear to me."

Thank you.

[Spoken before leaving the hall]

I have to leave, and I wish that we all go back better than we came into this hall today, even better tomorrow, and we become increasingly better and better servants of the Master, the ultimate Master who is nameless, formless, but yet in His mercy assumes names and forms like Lalaji and Babuji; comes to teach us, comes to show us by example how we don't need money, we don't need health, we don't need wealth, we don't need a proper house; how a torn *razaai* [quilt] is enough in the bitterest cold of Uttar Pradesh for seven people to sleep under; how pain and suffering patiently borne ennobles a human being; how dedication to the spirit of the divine existence makes their life noble, though they were not of noble birth themselves. What is noble birth? So we have to seek that *divine* nobleness, where we shall perhaps be known as *noble* souls, not because we are Lord So-and-so and Noble So-and-so, but because spiritually we are qualified. Brother Sarnadji will now take over.

Thank you.

8

Take Spirituality Seriously

Dear brothers and sisters,

I am happy to be with all of you and according to the program, I shall be with all of you for the next ten days – eight or ten days.

I was reminded that my last visit to Trivandrum was in 1977, when I accompanied my master Babuji Maharaj. Babuji Maharaj was invited by his Highness the Maharaja of Travancore. I was also there with my father, my wife and some other abhyasis. I did not realise that twenty-five years have passed, because I have been visiting the northern parts of Kerala, somehow this place has remained without a visit for so many years. From the year 1957 to about 1972, I used to visit Trivandrum almost four times a year, sometimes six times a year. No abhyasis. Of course I myself became an abhyasi only in 1964. But when we visited Trivandrum with my master, the Maharaja

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his Highness, his mother Sethu Parvathi Bai, they used to come morning and evening for meditation for three days. So we should think they are our abhyasis.

Kerala has received much praise for its literacy, high rate of literacy, for the beauty, natural beauty of the state and it has become a big tourist attraction. But my master always said, "Why are there no abhyasis in that state?" You know two or three states in India have a problem. Kerala is one of them. Bengal is the other one. Maharashtra is the third one. All with their own very well developed social structures, a very good level of culture, education, their own saints, their own temples, their own poets. If you have Vallantho here they have Rabindranath Tagore there and so on. Maharashtra is full of saints but with all these, these three states have suffered as far as spirituality is concerned.

I understood the reason long ago but it was confirmed a few days ago when I saw the serial about Lord Krishna, where Devaki [Krishna's biological mother] and her husband are in the prison of Kamsa [Devaki's brother who imprisoned them]. Lord Krishna appears to her as a baby because she is weeping. The baby [Krishna] is already on the other side of the river but he appears to her as a baby, and she is singing to that baby, loving it. When the poor man [Devaki's husband] wakes up, he cannot see anything. He only sees a blanket rolled up on her lap. So in the Brighter World Radha Devi asks Lord

Krishna, "Why don't you allow him to see you?" So Lord Krishna says, "My dear, I have nothing to do with this. I am there. Anybody who wants to see me can see me." Then she says, "Why is he not able to see you?" Lord Krishna says, "He is using his intellect and his mind to reach God. She loves, therefore because of her love she can see; but because of his intellect and his mind he is not able to see, though I am there." So you must understand the Lord is everywhere. And if we cannot see it is our so-called intelligence, *buddhi* [intellect], *ahankar* [ego], two things which prevent us from seeing what is in front of us; or as Babuji said, what is within us.

In religion we worship God outside, like you have this *ambalam* [temple] here next door, ringing the bell, some *namboodri* [priest] coming and doing *puja* [worship]. He must be wet; nobody must touch him, all these funny things. *Anushtana, niyama, aachaara* [different steps in worship ritual], all enemies of spirituality. Why are they enemies of spirituality? Because they divide human beings from human beings. If you are worshipping Shiva, you are against worship of Devi or Bhagavathi Amman [other deities] and so on. So we have become crystallised into small pockets of human beings. And we are proud – we are proud of what we are and we forget what we have to be. As Babuji said so often, we have to be totally naked to see Him in His presence. Naked means not removing your clothes and bathing in the river or the sea – all qualities must go. Lord Krishna says that even if you know you are a *bhakta* [devotee], it is *aham bhava* [I am]. A bhakta who says I am a bhakta is lost. A devotee is one who is totally in the consciousness of the divine.

Therefore religion separates us. In the Hindu religion there are so many groups. And within those groups there are sub-groups. So how are you ever going to see God? I don't think the possibility exists, therefore we have to be satisfied with Lord Guruvayoorappan in his ambalam, Bhagavati Amman on the beach, and so many temples all over the world in India. Instead of God we have temples. The alternative is very clear. If you want God, no temples. It applies to all other religions too. In Christianity I believe there are more than five hundred different denominations of Christians. The major division is of course the Protestant and the Catholic. But then you have so many Syrian Christians. You know them in Kerala very well and they also quarrel, you see. They are also divided. When Protestantism came into existence in England, he cut off the relations with the Catholic Church, the Pope. You know the story of your famous singer who is a Christian but is not allowed to sing about the Hindu deities, and he was threatened that he would not be buried within the church. He said, "It doesn't matter where I am buried after I am dead. After I am dead? Will I know where I am buried, whether I am burnt, whether the dogs are eating me? Who knows?" So this is the sort of pressure that religion builds on us to hold us. And we have all these external symbols — *amam* [salutation], and this *vibuthi* [ash put on forehead] and this and that, so that we can recognise as if we are recognising enemies, *ayyoda* [oh no]!

So if you want God you must go outside religion. Or better to put it in Babuji's words: you must go beyond religion. Babuji said that religion is a kindergarten school to give us some idea that a God exists, but temples cannot tell us what that God is, where that God is, who that God is. That we have to find out ourselves. This journey to find God, the Real, the Truth, is what we call spirituality – *Adhyatma vidya*. So I am glad. Where in Babuji's time we had hardly any abhyasis in Kerala, you could count them on the fingers of one hand. Same in Bengal, today we have few Bengalis. The Mission has been in Calcutta ever since I can remember, no Bengali abhyasis. Where are the Bengalis? I ask every time. But they say we have our Ramakrishna, we have our Vivekananda, we have our Kali Mata, why do we need another Ram Chandra and all that nonsense? They don't want, like you say here, "We have our own Bhagavathi Amman, we have our Padmanabha Swami." Even the Maharaj has to go every day to the temple or he has to pay a fine of I think twelve *pranams* [salutations] or sixteen pranams in olden days. He is fined if he does not go to the temple every day. The Maharaja!

So what is this religion where it separates you as a total community, as a state with all the beautiful qualities of a wonderful language, of an intelligent community, who are well educated, who are supposed to be the most literate in India, an excellent culture, beauty of nature; and yet as far as spirituality is concerned – a desert. If it is like that, God did not create Kerala as a spiritual desert. God created the world as a spiritual world, the universe as a spiritual universe. We have dried out. We have lost all the idea of the truth. What is reality – we have lost. We will worship Krishna as Guruvayoorappan but if he comes, we will not accept him in any other form, Guruvayoorappan – you see.

So I have to tell you people, you are all my sisters and brothers, take spirituality seriously. I have been watching the Mahabharata serial. The Krishna serial day after day and there are so many beautiful lessons. There is one story of Narada. He sees a young lady, quite pretty and with two old people, very old, one man and one woman. And they are all weeping loudly, what we call in Tamil *oppari* [*ayyo*, *ayyo* – crying loudly]. So Narada says, "What is wrong? You are a nice beautiful girl, are these your parents?" She says, "No, no Lord, they are my children." He said, "But you are so young and beautiful, how can these old people who are almost dying, how can they be your children, they must be your parents?" She said, "No, no they are my children. See, I am Dharma, and these are my children in some name like *shraddha* [faith] and *bhakti* [devotion]. And when *Kaliyuga* [the dark age] came, we fell. Dharma itself falls."

That is why Lord Krishna in the Gita says, *Yada-Yada hi Dharmasya Glanir bhavati* [Every time righteous living fails]. Even dharma is in danger and this story shows it. And she says, "The moment we fell, my children have become like this. Somehow, because I retain some dharma in me, I was able to recover and regain my form. But these poor people, my children, they are dying. Lord, you do something." Narada says, "Only Lord Krishna can help, nobody else can do it." So Dharma says, "What to do, I have no more power to approach Lord Krishna, will you do something for me Narada?" Narada says, with a little *ahamkaram* [pride], "For me everything is possible." So Dharma says, "Really, you are able to go to Lord Krishna!" Narada again, with a little ahamkara, says, "For me the *saptalokas* [seven worlds] are open you see. For me nothing is impossible my dear. I will go and speak to Lord Krishna about you."

And he starts on the journey. He goes on and on and on, he cannot find Lord Krishna but there is Lord Krishna just in front on his swing with Radha. And Radha asks Lord Krishna, "Why are you torturing this fellow? He is your *param bhakta* [ardent devotee]. He is Brahma *putra* [Brahma's son], and why are you torturing, why don't you show yourself?" And Lord Krishna again says, "Radha! I am here. Anybody wants, they can see me. And Narada, he cannot see me. I am surprised you see." Then Radha asks, "Why is he not able to see you?" Lord Krishna says, "Did you see what happened in *bhuloka* [earth]? He became proud, he became arrogant. He said, 'I am Narada, for me nothing is impossible.' His eyes have become closed. When he gives up this ahamkara he will see me again." So after a long time Narada starts weeping, he says, "Lord, Lord, where are you, and why are you teasing me like this? Please help me to see you again, forgive me for my arrogance." And then Krishna in turn says, "Narada what took you so long?"

And this arrogance is a very important thing, it is our biggest enemy. Prejudice, arrogance, pride, all these are our enemies. If you are proud that you are a Keralite, and I am proud that I am a Tamilian, somebody is proud that he is a Bengali – no spirituality. "My language is the best." Gone.

So you see, in God's universe there can only be *samatva* – equality. We are all equal in the eyes of God: nobody is better, nobody is worse; no culture is better, no culture is worse; no language is better, no language is worse. In fact, God did not create culture, he did not create language, he did not create countries, he did not create states. What did he create? He created a universe full of love, hoping that love will take us to Him.

So Sahaj Marg is, above all, the way of love. We have to love each other, help each other, drop all consciousness of what we are. Babuji was fond of a story. He was again and again repeating that story about Vidura's wife – the Vidura of the Mahabharata. Lord Krishna went to see Vidura and hearing his voice, Vidura's wife who was bathing in the bathroom, she came out naked. She had no self-consciousness. So Lord Krishna took his *angavasthram* [shawl] and covered her. Then she brought some bananas, peeling the banana, throwing the fruit on the ground, giving him the peel, the skin, and he was eating it. Remember what the Lord says — *pathram, pushpam, palam, thoyam yome baktya prayachchathi*. Meaning – he doesn't care whether it is fruit or just a leaf or a flower, anything. *Yome bhaktya prayachchathi*, he said, that I accept.

But all this fingering, and pointing this way like our *pujaris* [priests] do in the temple. And *deeparadhana* [worship ritual with lights] with sixty four *deepams* [lights], and their pride that they are priests, they should not be touched. I asked one priest, "Have you got leprosy or something that you should not be touched?" He was very angry. He could not say you have leprosy. So what could he answer? He could only look at me like that, not give me *prasadam* [holy offering]. I said *theek-hai* [that's ok] you don't give, the Lord gives, isn't it? So very important to understand is the simple truth of spirituality.

Babuji Maharaj said God is simple. The way to find Him and achieve Him must also be simple. God belongs to everybody. He is not the possession of any religion or caste or community. Therefore the Brahmin cannot say God is mine, nor can the *aadivasi* [tribal] or the Nair [a community] or the *namboodri* [priest]. God belongs to all. Now if we have the sense of superiority that God is mine, all these people are useless; even the *pujari* [priest] is fallen lower than anybody else. We are created equal, and that equality one must bring back. Religion divides, politics divides, language divides, culture divides, and everything you can think of which is important today divides us. Money divides us. Money divides even families, even brothers. Brothers are quarrelling with brothers. Every day you see dowry death. You go to Uttar Pradesh, the newspaper is full of dowry deaths. "Give me more money." The wife is not important, money is important.

So, anything that divides us must go. Our colour, our religion, our community, our language, everything has to go. Only here in Sahaj Marg we can find something of a beginning in this direction. That there are nairs here, namboodris here, I am sure there are some *dalits* [another caste] and I never ask who are you, what are you? You want to come and sit – sit. So we have to understand that we are distributing here not prasadam from the ambalam, not showing the way to some heaven which doesn't exist. You know, Babuji Maharaj said he found hell but he never found heaven. Where is heaven? *Swargam evada*? [Where is heaven?] Doesn't exist, *ayyo swargam illa* [oh, no, there is no heaven]. What will you do now, no swargam? So the only place we can go to is *naraka* [hell]. Or stay here and become spiritual and achieve the Brighter World, understand! Because heaven doesn't exist, swarga doesn't exist.

So you have to read Babuji's works very carefully. Accept them not here, but here with the heart. Treat all as your brothers and sisters – Babuji Maharaj has said. That means there is no more namboodri, no more nair, no more this, no more that. Everything is gone. If you are able to do it, we are becoming slowly human. Understand very carefully. Divinisation does not start so easily, we are only becoming human. Because like dog likes dog, cat likes cat, lion likes lion, human being must like human being. This is not duty, this is not something special, it is something natural.

We have become unnatural in dividing ourselves. That unnaturalness must go and we must become natural. This is spirituality. From the unnatural to the natural, from that which divides to that which unites, from that which used to lead us to naraka to that which can lead us to the master. Three things: *asatoma satgamaya; tamasoma jyotirgamaya; mrutyorma amrutamgamaya* [from lies, take me to truth; from darkness, take me to light; from death, take me to eternity], says the Veda. They are no longer useful to us. They are good but it is like giving *badam halwa* [almond dessert] to a diabetic. It is good but he cannot eat it.

So we have to make these three truths now, you understand? From unnaturalness to naturalness, between God and man there should be no idol, no pujari. What separates me from my God is only my *ahamkara* [ego] and my *buddhi* [intellect]. Throw it away. You see now the car I came in, it is in the rain. We don't worry. I should not get wet, my car can get wet. But if it is jewellery, the woman will cover the jewellery. They will get wet, but the jewellery must be dry. See you are selling the jewellery, paying the doctor – consequences; from inhuman to human. Now if we are inhuman, we don't care for anybody else. "I must succeed." What about your brother? "What shall I say Saar [sir]? He is an idiot, he is a fool. Because of my mother, I am keeping him at home." Your own brother! Where is humanity, where is love, where is family, where is sharing? What we have, we must all share – all these values have been thrown away.

So we have to restore human values to human beings. We are training dogs, we are training cats, we are training lions, but we are not able to train ourselves. Until we can train ourselves... this is why it is called *swadhyaya* [self-training]. Anybody can teach you, but you have to undertake the teaching, training, and the becoming of what you have to become. If you don't do that, *punarapi maranam, punarapi jananam* [death again, birth again], as Shankara said. And it is not God or Yama [Lord of

Death] or somebody who punishes you, it is because you are not moving from here. The way is open. If you cannot go, nobody will help you. So this is the swadhyaya you see – you have to train yourself. First of all, you must know that today's human being is an animal – corrupt, lustful, avaricious, no brotherhood. All this has to be thrown away. We must become humans first, as Babuji said – from animal man to human and then divinisation. It looks to be a very long path. But it is like cutting the tree. If you tell a fool, "Remove this tree," and he starts plucking one leaf by one leaf, how long will it take? The wise man will cut one stroke and the tree is gone.

There is one story about Narada again – he was going to heaven to see the Lord. On the way he met a rishi who had been meditating. He said, "Narada, where are you going?" "Now I am going to see the Lord, *Ksheerasagara* [another name for Krishna]." "Will you please ask him how much longer I have to meditate and when I will reach liberation?" Narada said, "Yes. I will find out." Then some distance later, under a tamarind tree, there is a man like a mad man, singing and dancing. He also asked Narada, "Please, find out how many lives I have to take before I will be liberated." After some days Narada came back. The rishi, who is a tapasvi [one who meditates] asks him, "Narada! What is the answer?" He says, "Lord told me you have to take two more *janmas* [births]." And the rishi was totally lost, he hit himself on the head and said, "What shall I do, two more janmas! I am such a great rishi, so much meditation and two more janmas?" Narada said, "What can I do? This is what the Lord said." Then this mad man who is dancing under a tree comes, and he says, "Narada, do you have the answer to my question?" Narada says, "My son! The Lord said you have to take as many janmas as there are leaves on this tree." And the mad man was happy!! "That is all? Oh! How blessed I am." And at that moment, he was liberated. Why was he liberated that moment? Because in his head he did not count how many leaves! No, he did not care. He said the Lord has said, so it must be, and it was – immediately. This is faith; this is acceptance; this is surrender.

What is so wonderful about liberation that I should have it now? Do we know what is liberation? Do we know where we are going? Do we know what is there? All I know is, it may be full of *vasukis* [king of snakes in Hindu mythology] and others. Other snakes you see, frightening things, we don't know. So we are again looking for something we don't know. Like we are in our life, looking for happiness and wealth in beautiful houses, in expensive possessions and we don't know why we are unhappy. Millionaire, big house, five cars, two cooks – unhappy! Most beautiful girl as his wife, unhappy! Ugly woman as his wife, unhappy. Beggar unhappy, maharaja unhappy, everybody unhappy!

What is the secret? Because this [the head] wants something, this [the heart] wants something else. We are following this head and have forgotten this heart. Now when we forget this head and remember this heart, our spiritual journey begins and our progress is faster and faster; and soon we shall reach our goal. Be assured of that.

I pray that my master will bless you with that.

Thank you.

9

Be Honest with Yourself

Sahaj Marg is based on three 'M's: Master, Mission, and Method. Babuji Maharaj said there are only three things that you can really call your own, *really call your own*: my master, my Mission, my method. Because what is truly mine, really mine, must be mine forever. Something which is mine today and not mine tomorrow – is not really mine. We say 'my ashram'; but today we are here, tomorrow we are gone. Then only the idea remains. We say 'my children'. They get educated; go off to America to earn dollars. Of course they are my children but they are somewhere, I am somewhere, ten thousand miles away.

So there is a great deal of sorrow when what is mine is not really mine. All sorrow comes when we realise that what I thought was mine is not really mine, was never really mine, could never really be mine. Because circumstances take things away from us, our own actions take things away from us, time

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takes things away from us – so what is mine? But the master being an eternal entity, the true master, he is always mine. And because the Mission is his, the method is his, they are also mine – because they are mine forever. It is not enough to *say* this, because unless you have really made it yours, it is also not yours. There is no point in saying 'my master', and then allowing him to go away, by going to the temple, going to this, going to that. Because now you are yourself losing what you thought was yours by not holding on to it.

So he is my master when he is here. And when he is gone – Bhagavathi Amman, Guruvayoorappan, Ambalam, Ambalavasigal [various deities], et cetera, you see. So then what is really mine? Neither. Because when he was here, these were not mine. When these are there, he is not mine. As Kabir says in one of his beautiful *dohas*: *Jab mai tha*, *guru naahi*, *jab guru hai*, *main naahi* [When I exist my guru does not; and when he exists then I do not]. There cannot be both. *Prem gali ati saankari* [The way of love is very narrow]. Two cannot walk on it.

So the master must be inside me. Then he is really mine. Outside me, masters will come and go. The physical master has a limitation in time, in space. He is born, he lives, he teaches, he goes. You may call it *mahasamadhi* [conscious departure at time of death], you may call it death, you may call it whatever it is, but that is where time comes and says – "Out!" So the only way of keeping him always mine is to have him here {heart}. This is the secret of Sahaj Marg. That it is possible to hold anything as mine, especially the three Ms, if they are in my heart, that is. What is *it* that is in my heart? What I love is in my heart. Isn't it? If I have no love, it is not in my heart.

So my children are in my heart because I love them. My neighbour's children are not in my heart. Babuji Maharaj went to the extent of saying that love can be and must be only for the Highest. What we manifest here is only affection – *sneha*. Not *prema bhaavam* but *sneha bhaavam* {not love but affection}. I have affection for my wife, for my children, for my brothers, for my sisters. That is why you write 'yours affectionately' at the end of a letter. Are they really in your heart? Yes, for the time being. Like a child has a toy, it will not go to sleep without the toy. It must take it into the bathroom; it must take it into the kitchen. One day the toy breaks and the child is heartbroken, we say. So we must not have in our heart such things as can break, as can go away, as can leave us, and leave us heartbroken. You understand? Anything which is going to break my heart... because they are working for themselves. Anything which will keep my heart whole, wholesome, full, complete, healthy, eternal, there is only one – that which comes into my heart must itself be eternal. *Nirantaram* {Permanent}.

So the question of why we need a master, what we need {a master} for – All this is ridiculous to speculate and ask questions and debate. Don't we have our gods? When did you have your god? It is foolish to say, "I have my god." Where is he? You show him to me? "*Avada, ambalatthil* [There, in the temple]." But then he is not yours.

In one scene in the life of Lord Krishna – when he is still a baby and he has been taken across the river and is now being brought up by Yashoda [Krishna's caretaker-mother]. Devaki [Krishna's biological mother] is in the prison with her husband. She has him (Krishna) on her lap. He comes to her and *thaalaattu* (what we heard yesterday in the music), Devaki is singing the thaalaattu. But the husband cannot see (Krishna). He says, "What is this? She is going mad by her love for her son." And then in the *devaloka* [heaven] or I mean what they call *goloka,* there the eternal Krishna is sitting with Radha by his side. Radha asks him, "Why are you playing this mischief on her poor husband? Why can he not see you?" Krishna says, "She sees because she has love. He cannot see because he has only intellect and ego. It is not my fault." He tells Radha, "I am there for all to see. I hide myself from nobody. If I am visible, it is because they have removed the curtain of ignorance, of hatred, of prejudice, everything. Only love is there. I am exposed because of that love. If I am invisible, it is not because I am invisible but because they have dropped so many curtains between themselves and me" – *purdah* [curtain/veil]. Babuji Maharaj used to call it 'purdah of prejudice'. "My God," you know. Who is your god? Shiva? And Shiva laughs, "Look at this fool. When did he have me, that he calls 'my Shiva'." And the only secret is: all purdahs have to be taken away.

Only that is mine which is really mine; the rest are not mine. He is not my Shiva, my Vishnu, my Brahma – none of these are mine because they too are not eternal. The Shastras say that they too have a life, maybe millions of years. It does not matter. Babuji Maharaj explained that great souls who have done very meritorious deeds like *tapasya* [penance] and what not, they are appointed to the post of a Brahma, of a Shiva. And when their tenure is over, they come back to this *bhooloka* [earth], which we call *karmaloka*, *mrityuloka* [land of karma or deeds, land of death]. And from here, they have to evolve again. So it is said that the gods are jealous of human beings because only the human being can evolve straight from his human level to the divine level. Everything else has to go through various steps. So, you see what a great opportunity we have in being born as human beings, and then we waste it. We waste it because of our pride, because of our prejudice, because of our religion.

We do not have one religion, we have twenty thousand religions. Even within Hinduism, we have our own gods. My god is Sastha, your God is, I don't know what? Jagadamba. Mookaambika, that is also one. How is your god different from my god? No answer. There is only one God. *Ekam Sat* [One truth]; but at least do we realise that all gods are the same? No. If it was the same, what is the use of my having Vishnu, and you having Brahma, and you having Shiva, no? So we keep them separate. We want them eternally separate. Somewhere we offer flowers. Somewhere we offer sweets. Somewhere we offer a fully cooked meal. Somewhere we sacrifice chickens, goats, buffaloes – kill life, so that you can be prosperous. And, shockingly, even children are sacrificed so that the father can be prosperous. Almost twenty, thirty times a year, you can read in the newspaper of child sacrifice. Because some *mantrikan* [magician] or *tantrikan* [trickster] told him if you sacrifice this child you will be prosperous. So what has the human being come to? That the child he says he loves, he is willing to cut its throat so that he can be more prosperous? Tell me, what is this love? It is a sham. It is a humbug. It is a lie.

So we come back to this famous statement of Yagnavalkya to his wife in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad: "Not for the sake of the son, my dear, is the son dear to the father or the mother. The son is dear for the sake of the father or the mother." We don't love anything. We love it for ourselves. My father is dear to me because he provides for me. He buys me new clothes, he gives my school fees. When he stops giving this, I hate him. Here it is hidden, all this hatred for the parents. In many societies, it is open and they say, "What did my father do for me? I did not ask to be born. They had their fun and I am the product. So what duty have I towards my parents?" They ask bluntly, openly, even at the age of eight, ten, twelve – honest. Our people hide everything under a cloak of sanctity, culture, tradition.

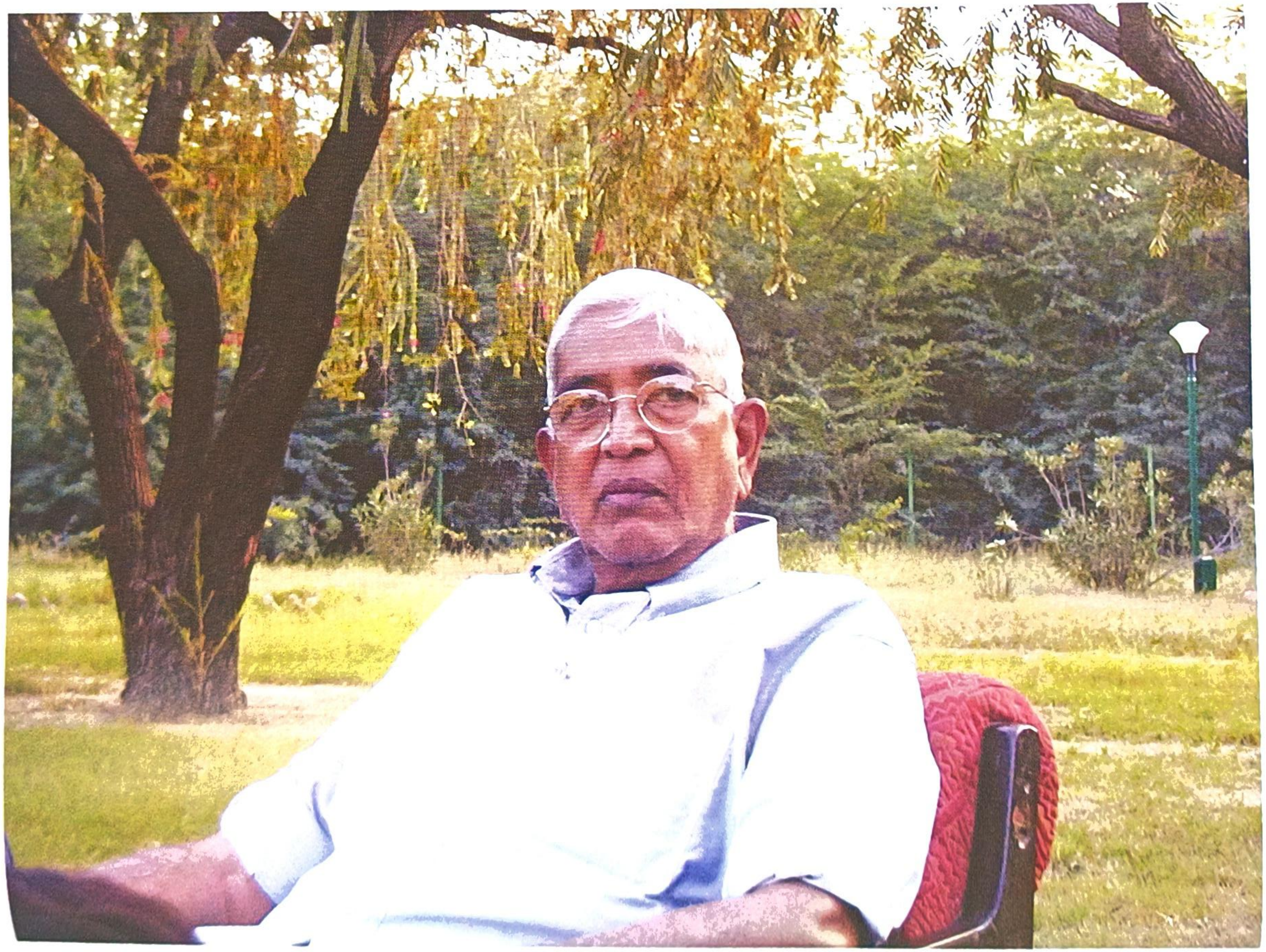
Your father comes to your home after being with your brother for six months, and your wife will ask you, "How long is he coming for?" "No, no, *Achchanallo, nyaan adhu ariyaam* [He is my father. I don't know]." "I only asked you how long he is going to stay, not whether he is your father or not?" And the son, he may love his father, but he loves his wife more, or he thinks he loves his wife more. But he cannot ask Achchan [father] openly, "When are you going, Daddy?" So after one week he quietly says, "Reservation is difficult to get, Daddy, nowadays. It is better to reserve in advance." So daddy says, "*Manaslayi* [understood]." He understands what his son is trying to tell him: that your time is up. His heart is heavy. He is sad. "My *own* son," he says, "he is suggesting to me that I reserve because the reservation is difficult." Then in the evening, he calls his daughter-in-law, because he knows where the mischief is, you see. "*Nokku* [See!], tell *appukutti*, or *ammukutti* [nicknames], let him make reservation for the first train available." "But Daddy, you just came last week." "*Nyaan ariyam, pakshey...* [I know. But...]"

That is to assure the daughter-in-law, don't worry. And she goes and tells her husband, "Your Achchan has said reserve for the earliest date." He goes to his father, "*Endha* [What]? Daddy. You just came." "No, no, my son, you see, after all, your brother is also calling me."

We live in a world of lies. What to talk of love? There is not even affection. It is only whitewashing society, friends, and your own self: that I love my father, he must come, but he must go, not stay. And at whose pleasure must he stay? At my pleasure, not his. And then of course, when he dies we all shed a few tears, crocodile tears, that too nowadays; and if your religion prescribes it, you shave your head or remove your moustache or whatever of which people are so proud. Why have you taken off your hair? "No, no, my daddy, hmm... [sobbing]," [laughter].

This is society today. If anybody says he or she loves anything, in 999,999 cases out of one million, it is a lie. You love only yourself. *Swaartha jeevanam* it is called – selfish lives, where we project our love of ourselves upon something and say I love this. "Not for the sake of the wife, is the wife dear to the husband, my dear," says Yagnavalkya, "she is dear for the sake of the self of the husband." So when your husband tells you, "Darling, I love you," you say, "Yes, yes. I have heard this many times."

Truth does not have to be repeated. My master said, if you love your master, once in your lifetime



if you tell him, "I love you," it is enough. But if it is like in some societies, we have to tell our wives morning, afternoon, evening, and in between whenever possible, "I love you honey; I love you darling," it is not there at all. The word 'love' should not be spoken at all. Babuji Maharaj used to say, "It is not secret, it is sacred." Not *gupta rahasya* [secret], but it is so sacred that it must not be spoken about So when it is spoken about, it is a lie.

So, you see the three Ms are very important because here you don't have to tell lies. Either he is your master or he is not. If he is not, he doesn't care about it. It only matters to you. Unlike a father-son relationship where a father is also dependent on his son especially when he is old, here the master is not dependent on anybody. He is dependent on his master. Babuji Maharaj always used to say, when in trouble, "Lalaji Maharaj will send the solution," and it came. When there was help necessary in the Mission for whatever it may have been, for building an ashram, for doing this, doing that, he said, "Whatever I need, my master gives." And he said, "If this dependence on the master should break, I will die." Because this is the dependence on which life depends. Not love and happiness, comfort – that is this *bhoutika*, *loukika* [material] dependence. If I should have my connection with my master cut, my life will be extinguished. That sort of dependence is what we are talking about.

It is said of some particular birds that when one bird dies, its mate dies. It cannot live. It is said of animals too, especially dogs, that if they have grown up together and one dies, soon the other dies. In the animal kingdom, in the kingdom of birds, we find this sort of bonding of the two into such a determined, strong bond that they cannot exist without each other. But in our human society, such a love is only seen in cinemas. And there too you know it only because they talk, and run around the tree – the boy and the girl singing, "May we be together all life after life." What a *tamasha* [an act], you see. In this life you are not yet together; but you are praying that in future lives also you should be together? Is this romance? Is this love? Is this something you really want, or is it just to fool yourself into saying, "I love you so much that I want you to be with me for twenty more lives"?

So human life today as it exists by and large is a life of sham, of make-do, of lying to each other in society, in the house, in the family, within the family. Every time you write a letter to your father and say, "My dear father!" – I would rather say just, "My father" – is he really dear to you? Or is he dear to you because you are dear to yourself? – remembering Yagnavalkya's quotation again. This is the truth that truth demands. *Satyam vada* [speak the truth] means don't say, "I love you" when you don't really love somebody. Don't say, "I miss you" when you don't really miss anybody. Don't say, "Please come" when you hope he will not come. Don't invite when you don't want somebody to come, even to a marriage. Today we send invitations only to show our own greatness. "I sent five thousand invitations, especially to ministers." Some nasty ministers; two of them come and you have yourself photographed and framed. Even the marriage couple is forgotten. All the people in the *mohallah* [neighbourhood] should know ministers came to his marriage.

I remember one marriage about thirty years ago. One of our abhyasi families – the abhyasi's daughter was to be married. I went to the marriage and it was full of party (political party) people – one particular party. And the leader of the party, he came and blessed the *thali,* the *tirumangalyam* [the sacred thread and the pendant tied around the bride's neck] and I said, "Gone!" Because there was no sin he (the minister) had not committed and probably few of which even God did not know. And with his hands the thali was blessed, the tirumangalyam was blessed. One and a half years later the couple were divorced. This is a true story in which I participated, because I was the preceptor, he was the abhyasi in my city. Later on he came and wept. I told him I was there when I saw this tamasha happening, what did you expect? But today we prefer that minister should bless the thali, the tirumangalyam, and a video-photographer must take it and it must be shown in public, "Minister blessed." A divorce is never shown! So we have become degraded, we have become like dogs. Even dogs are faithful. Babuji said, dog is the most faithful creature – one master! Therefore, he said D-O-G, if you reverse it, it is G-O-D, God. That loyalty of the dog we don't have.

So you see, it is not a question of Sahaj Marg and meditation, and cleaning, and *nirantara smaranam* [constant remembrance], and all this blah, blah, blah. It is first a question of honest living – honesty towards everything and mostly towards your own self. I must be honest with myself. I cannot lie to myself by telling my father I love him, when I know I don't love him. Am I not lying to myself? Am I not damaging myself? Babuji told me once, "You can tell any number of lies you like to others, but never lie to yourself." I am not suggesting that you should start telling lies to others because you are already doing it. It doesn't need advice from me. But don't lie to yourself, because one day you will believe it is true. "I am a good man, sir." Who has not said this? I cannot say of myself I am a good man. It is like a child going to school and saying, "I did well; but my teacher gave me low marks." Which student has not said this? And the father and the mother, who are hating the child for its poor performance, they lie to the neighbours. "What to say, sir, all night this poor child was studying, but you know nowadays how schools are? Political interference!" – lies.

So beware of your parents first at home. I know this is a bad advice in a world under a culture which believes *matrudevobhava*, *pitrudevobhava* [mother is

God, father is God], et cetera. But beware of your parents, because they are the people who tell you or teach you how to tell lies. Telephone call, cring-cring, cring-cring, cring-cring, and Ammu goes and picks up the phone, "*Achchaa!* [Father!] Telephone!" "Ammu! *Naan illainnu parayu* [Tell him I am not there]." Haven't we said this? Haven't we done it? Anybody here? Anybody willing to deny this? So the child grows up telling lies. Because Achchan is true! At that age, up to the age of ten or twelve, Achchan is God. Anything he says is right. Everything he does is right. Whatever he says is the truth. That is why children – boys and girls – begin to be suspicious of their parents around the age of twelve. That is when boys start disliking their fathers, girls start disliking their mothers, because they see they are fallen angels. "We thought they were angels but they are not." But we have already become conditioned to a particular way, a particular culture, to tell lies to protect your father is good.

"Malayalam culture is the best. Malayalam language, wonderful! Malayala *kaavyam* [poetry], Oh! Chips? *Assallayitindu*! [Excellent] Nothing that is Malayalam can be wrong." I agree, Malayalam and Malayali, and whatever is Kairali is good; but not necessarily better than anything else. You must do and say that my culture is good, but not better than other cultures – because then you shut the door to outside influence.

The communist empire in Russia flourished only because the borders were sealed. Nothing could come in; nothing could go out without the Politburo's permission. The people got the minimum necessary. Every family had a flat of about thirty square metres – no more. Huge apartments were constructed with about two thousand apartments. There was a central school and a shop, and underneath was an enormous boiler, so that every house had hot water running. They paid no rent. In the thirty square metres they had two rooms and a kitchen and a tiny toilet into which I could not enter often, because my shoulders were too wide and I would have knocked down the doors of the walls. I have lived there, that is why I am telling you. This is out of experience. I said, "Where are the beds?" They have these bed-cum-sofas. At night they pull it out and sleep on it. But they were told the Soviet political system is the best in the world. Look, everybody has a job, everybody has a flat, every child goes to school, buses and trams are free. Where else do you have a society like this? Capitalism – dirty, ugly, cheats, liars, crooks, mafia. And when the Berlin wall broke, they discovered they had been cheated generation after generation for at least three generations. And today the former Soviet Union is in shambles. No jobs. No money.

You see what lies can do? It can sort of mesmerise you into thinking that you are the best, when that is not really the case. You must go by the Soviet Union.

I have gone there several times. I was once living with a doctor. The maximum salary in the Soviet Union was about twenty dollars equivalent. Six roubles to a dollar, one hundred and twenty roubles per month was about the maximum. I am talking of people, not the communist bosses who had no salaries but who had everything. There was a telephone. I wanted a telephone directory. I asked my host, "Please give me a telephone directory." He said, "What?" I said, "Telephone directory." He said, "What is a telephone directory?" I said, "To look up numbers." He said, "Only the government has. Here we are given telephones. We know the numbers of the people we want to call. We cannot know any other number." Can you imagine a society like that in India?

We are poor. We are ignorant. We are stupid, but we are a free society. Now, this freedom must not be misused by importing into it ideas from political culture, and a dominant so-called civilisation which lasted seventy years, and which Babuji Maharaj said will die, in the land of its own birth, a natural death. It is dead there, but is still alive here. *Praandhu pudicho?* {Gone crazy or mad?} – that is your famous term. So we don't have the original. We have now the ghost. The ghost of that political system is still ruling you all here, and we are attached to it when we know that it has failed a whole group of nations, of republics, which was so powerful that America shivered when you said USSR. American political bosses, the president of the USA, the god almighty president, he shivered when he heard of the Soviet Union. But once that was gone, today they are dictating to the Russians and to all these people. Overnight the system collapsed.

So let us not put our faith in political systems, whether it is Congress, Communism, BJP, it does not matter. What we want is good government. Look for good government and good government can only come from good people, not from good parties – *manasilayo?* [understood?] Look for good people. Vote for good people. Our country has destroyed or very nearly destroyed itself by Nair voting for Nair, Pillai voting for Pillai, Kayasth voting for Kayasth, Muslim voting for Muslim. And on this, our political bosses are surviving, thriving, and will continue to survive if you continue to be like that. So you see everything is wrong. Our political motivation is wrong, because we vote for caste rather than for a good man. We vote for community rather than for good government. How will we ever get a good man and a good government when we are voting for Nairs and Pillais? How will you ever get God when you have nothing to give Him but only ask, ask, ask. And He says, "I have everything to give, but you are asking for trivial things." Promotion – "How much do you want?" "I am getting hundred and fifty. If I got two hundred, I would be happy." God says, "What is this fifty? I do not know what is fifty." He cannot count, poor fellow, you see. Not fifty.

So, the three Ms, of which only one M is really important – my master. If he is really your master, all his resources are at your disposal without asking. You do not have to beg. You do not have to pray – what is his comes to you. You do not pray to the sun every morning and say, "O *Surya Deva* [Lord Sun] give me light." He gives without your asking. Isn't it? Suppose we had to pray to the sun every morning that the sunlight would come, where would we be? Do you mean to say because he prayed, there is light in his house; and you did not pray, that is why the darkness is in your house? It functions; it functions according to a divine law, predetermined. But we don't live according to a predetermined divine law. We are capricious. Our mind is changeable. Moment to moment we are changing our loyalties, our allegiance, our faith.

You read today about conversion. People are converted because it suits them materially to be converted. It is not a matter of faith. "I will get a better job there. My land will not be taken away by crooks. So I am converting myself." Is this religion? And are we treating Sahaj Marg in the same way? Are we coming here in a sort of conversion so that my life will be better, I will get better jobs? My married life will be happier. My children will prosper. Are we coming here like that? Or is it a one-to-one relationship – me and my master? In this relationship my family may prosper because of Master's kindness.

My children may prosper because of my master's kindness – not guaranteed. My master says, "You and I." Nowadays we very often hear of a marriage, that the husband says, "I married you, I did not marry your mother and father. I don't want them here in my flat." You must all be listening to this sort of thing, no? "I married you, not your whole family." So the divine association between a master and a disciple is a one-to-one relationship. You have a right to pray for others, but that it will be answered is at his will and pleasure and even that only when he is your master – my master.

I hope some of these things you will think over and take to heart and become real abhyasis of Sahaj Marg. Not like a horse, which is old, in this stable today and sold off, and old in that stable tomorrow. "Sir, I was practising Sahaj Marg for three years." "But where are you now?" "Narayana Guru." "Why?" "Somebody told me it is a little better." "In what way?" "Sahaj Marg says 'give up, give up, give up'. There they say 'take, take, take'." Wonderful! If you feel better there please go; but at least be sincere wherever you go. Be honest with yourself that I know what I am going for, and if I get it, I will remain; if I don't get it, I will not remain. Don't commit fraud with yourself, against yourself. Because running from pillar to post like this, our whole life is wasted. Our life is not a very long life, human life. We don't have eternity to play with. Nowadays we do not know how long we have to live, because we see children dying, youth dying, middle-aged people dying, old age people of course dying. We have no time to fool around. It is a very serious business, this life – the human life.

Adi Shankara said it is very rare to have a human life. Having a human life, which is very rare, it is very rare to be at the same time there as a great Mahaan or Maha Purush [evolved human being]. And having the good fortune to be a human being when there is a great soul present, to make use of him is the greatest benefit, greatest *punya* [merit]. Three miracles – to be born when he is there, and then to be able to get in touch with him, and make use of him and grow with him, grow into him something like him. That is the greatest miracle of a human existence that is possible. Babuji Maharaj said, "Such a possibility comes once in several thousands of years, tens of thousands of years." In computer language they say the window is open. I say the window is open now; those who want can use it. Otherwise if it is closed, even God cannot help us.

I pray that my master bless all of you.

Thank you.

10
Wake Up!

My Kerala trip is almost at an end and we have only one sitting tomorrow morning, and after that I shall be leaving this state. These people are asking me to speak. I don't know what to say, but I will tell you some of the things I have observed since I landed in Trivandrum eight days ago.

I find that, while there is a lot of enthusiasm, there is not a commensurate effort to back that enthusiasm. Enthusiasm without effort is not enough. I say this because uniformly I have found, in almost all the centres, in almost all the sittings, initially there is a period of sluggishness. The first ten-fifteen minutes, it's very sluggish. The transmission seems to find it difficult to penetrate, and that is a clear indication that enough cleaning is not done either by the abhyasis themselves or by the prefects. If you don't do the cleaning regularly every evening as prescribed, your progress will be retarded, slow, because transmission

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without cleaning is no use. Babuji Maharaj has said, "If you transmit to a thief he will become a better thief, and if you continue to transmit he will be the best thief." So you see, there is no use. In fact, if you have no time and you cannot meditate, do the cleaning. This *must* be done if you are interested in spiritual progress.

As for the prefects, this is my uniform experience all over the world that they find it much more pleasant to just transmit and then finish the sitting, because then there is no effort needed for them to put in. They are also happy, because if a prefect has to do the cleaning, he has to apply the will power; and that must be sustained over a period of half an hour, and it can be tiring. So prefects too, you will excuse my saying it, are avoiding cleaning during individual sittings and are only giving transmission. So there is contribution from both sides to lack of progress, and this sluggishness in the sittings I have observed uniformly from Trivandrum up to here today.

So we have to repeat that old Vedic – what should I say – spur, *uttishthata, jaagrata* – wake up. Spirituality is not a subject where you can just, what we call in Tamil, *mempillai meyaradhu,* like a cow cropping the grass from the top and walking away. If you are interested, you have to do it, and there is no such thing as 'whatever progress is available, that is enough', because this is not a subject to be tackled or treated in that way. Either we do it or we don't do it.

So I have to request all abhyasis to give more time to their individual cleaning. And I have to exhort prefects to attend to their abhyasis' condition rather than just to go on transmitting, and to give enough time. And if they have no time they should only do the cleaning and not transmit – after all, transmission comes all the time.

Of course, in some centres it has been better than others; but these are relative matters. Some abhyasis are better than others in condition. But there is nothing really praiseworthy yet here, except the growth of the Mission which, as I said perhaps in Aluva, has happened in spite of us. People are attracted because people need. Unfortunately, unlike food – which when you need, you find and you eat, because the stomach must be full – in spirituality you know you need, but there is no hunger. As Babuji Maharaj has said, "There is no craving." So we give it a superficial touch and we are all satisfied that we have done our work, our duty, and it is very much like this going to the temple. I go to the prefect, sit half an hour, talk for half an hour, come back satisfied that one more sitting is over. There is no such thing as 'one more sitting being over.'

This is an unending journey – towards Infinity, Babuji has written, and the progress is also eternal, unending. You cannot say, "I have achieved enough." I know bank clerks who are offered promotion, but there is not enough inducement by way of salary and they want to stay where they are, so they refuse promotion. Here we cannot say, "I have had enough." So please attend to this very carefully, very regularly, and every time you have a sitting from your prefects or preceptors, write your diary and see whether your condition is lighter or not. If you go back the same as you came, there is no use. If you go back worse than when you came, it is really regrettable and tragic.

So the diary is the second thing which is very important. Every time you sit in meditation, you should note down what you feel immediately after the sitting. I praise these Western people for this habit of diary writing, because they have their book, the sitting is over, they think for ten minutes and start writing and they won't stop until they have written what they have to write. We wait to go home and then write at home – there are visitors, then there is dinner, and then there is television news to be seen, then the latest issue of *Malayala Manorama* – it goes on like that. Next day you don't know what happened, you have forgotten. It's like a dream; you wake up and it is finished. Diary must be written immediately. Then, you know, you will be able to read yourself. If you read the diary over a one-year period, you will find the changes; and you have recorded it, so your faith will grow because it is your observation – not some prefect saying something in which you may or may not believe, but something you have observed yourself, like a headache: "There was headache, I took aspirin, the headache is gone." This is your own observation.

Here also you must be able to observe and say, "I was feeling heavy, I was feeling dull, I was feeling gross; I went to the prefect, he gave me a forty-five minute sitting, and at the end of it when I got up I was feeling light, my heart was light," whatever you feel. Because there are two things that we need – one is the individual growth of the abhyasis in the Mission; after all, the Mission is working for them. Tomorrow we are going to start construction of the ashram here. It is for your sake, and if you don't use it properly it will be another club, Sahaj Marg club!! Of course, socially it will be good; people meet, talk, very happy, have Sunday lunch. But that is not the purpose of Sahaj Marg. The purpose of Sahaj Marg is individual growth of every abhyasi to the highest possible extent. That is what Master was there for, and he is there and will be there. But if you don't use him, what is the use?

And the second part is the growth of the Mission in terms of number of abhyasis, so that more and more people can grow individually and we have a huge population of spiritual people whose presence will be, shall we say, capable of elevating society in this part of the world – elevating in the sense of inducing people to follow a life filled with higher values, fearlessly and purposefully. If you are not an example to others but only talk about Sahaj Marg, no use. Actually, when we talk it is not our speech that penetrates into the heart of the one who is listening but the conviction with which you speak, the way you speak and the way your speech reflects your inner condition. If this is lacking, then we may go on talking, talking, talking, and nothing will happen, and then we will say we had two thousand abhyasis; we still have two thousand abhyasis after twenty years.

So individual growth of the abhyasis, spiritually, to the highest possible extent, growth in the number of abhyasis and, of course, that will mean growth in the number of prefects. And for the purpose of what I am saying, the prefects are also abhyasis; they must watch their own growth, they must write their diaries first before they insist on you writing your dairy. They must see whether they are growing or not. If a school teacher who is doing mathematics remains at the level of matriculation and is trying to teach college students, he can't do it. This is a path in which the prefects have to be a step ahead of the abhyasi all the time – in knowledge of the Sahaj Marg *paddhati* [system],its practice, its principles; in their own practice, in their advancement on the spiritual path. Because after all, the leader must be ahead of one whom he is leading. If he is not, what is the use of his being a leader?

Being a leader carries a great deal of responsibility. He must be able to go before others, where he is leading the others. He must be able to do it, not only to show them he knows the way, but to show them how it is done; and he must clear the path of all obstructions so that they can follow easily, where he had to do it with a great deal of difficulty. In fact, I think a leader is very much like one of these earth movers, or like a tank, battle tank, which makes the way as it goes. There is no way for a tank; you can't say, "Give me a road, a national highway." It goes on mountains; it goes through rivers – that is a tank. It creates its way.

The master created the way for us; we have to follow that path. There may be impediments, there may be obstructions; the prefect has to clear it, and the abhyasi must follow, become a good follower, so that perhaps someday he can also be a leader – he or she. There cannot be a leader who has never been a follower. That is a misnomer. In the army they have a very wonderful saying that, "One who has not obeyed cannot command." Before you can command you must have learnt obedience, total obedience. Before you can lead you must have followed. So prefects must follow the Ten Maxims, follow the practice without swerving from the path – meticulously, regularly, day after day. If they don't do it, they are betraying the interest of the abhyasis whom they are supposed to lead, and that would be very, very sad. It's like a teacher who doesn't know mathematics trying to teach mathematics and then saying, "Two plus two, write," and saying, "Twenty-two."

So this is all I have to say, that you all must deserve what you are getting. You are going to have an ashram. You must deserve it – deserve it in the sense that you are prepared to use it, deserve it in the sense that you will use it for the purpose for which it is going to be created – that is meditation, and meditation alone. You must deserve your prefects; that is, you must use them, not allow them to sit idle. Insist on their giving you sittings. If they say ten minutes and that's all, you say, "What is this ten minutes sitting – are you Babuji Maharaj?" Because Babuji Maharaj gave me once a sitting for forty-five seconds; but then that is from a level which is extraordinarily high and which you cannot tolerate, you cannot absorb. Suppose you try to run this fan on 2300 volts, or 23,000 volts, what will happen to the fan or the bulb? They will explode.

Unless you rise progressively and improve your condition progressively, you cannot be given transmission from a higher level. Not because the master doesn't want to, but because he cannot do it for danger of destroying a nervous system, for instance. Babuji Maharaj used to say, "It will destroy the nervous system." It is like higher voltage where you want low voltage. So the master is not there to deny you the high, the higher and the highest, but his hands are tied because you are not rising to the level at which he can give you that transmission. It is like a waterfall. Can you bathe under a waterfall?

You are still only capable of bathing under a shower – what to talk of waterfalls. We want here people like the great Rishi Bhagirath who received Ganga on his head, because if you are not a Bhagirath you can't bring Ganga down to earth – very simple.

So to make Master work for you, you have to rise progressively so that his level of transmission to you rises, and he is happier and happier because he can give you more and more of what he has got, which he is waiting to give but unable to give. Babuji Maharaj told me so many times during his lifetime that he was very sad to think that if somebody did not rise to the occasion he may have to throw all his spiritual wealth on the atmosphere and leave, because there was nobody to give it to. So please don't betray the master also in the process. By betraying yourself, betraying your prefects, you are going to betray your master; but the most important thing is your self-betrayal – that you come for meditation and don't meditate; you go and don't do the cleaning, and then you say, "I don't have time – I have this, I have that."

Excuses are available without number for not doing something For doing something, there is only one reason: that it has got to be done. So please, I hope you have listened to what I have to say and you listened in the sense that you will follow it and do it for your sake, not for prefect's sake or zonal secretary's sake or somebody else's sake – Master's sake – but for your own sake. So by effort only we can qualify for his blessings. His blessings are always the same. Babuji said, "For anything I can only do transmission or do cleaning." There are only two things in our, you know, *Rama baanam tundil* [Lord Rama's quiver of arrows] – the *ambu* [arrow] of *anbu* [love], the ambu of cleaning and the ambu of transmission – three.

So please remember, if you don't do it and you are not true to Sahaj Marg, you are not true to yourself; you are betraying yourself, you are betraying your higher interest, you are betraying a glorious future that waits for every Sahaj Marg abhyasi.

Thank you.

11

Tomorrow Never Comes

Dear brothers and sisters,

There is a saying in English that a rose by any other name smells as sweet. So, what you have to understand is the meaning, what is being said, not the language. Language is only a vessel. If you have *majjiga* [buttermilk] in a silver vessel or a gold vessel, or a clay pot, it is still *majjiga, avuna* [buttermilk, is it not]? So, what is inside is what matters. That is what we have to try to understand, and then to practice, and then to achieve.

It is a sad thing to see people wasting a lot of time. There is a saying in English that wealth lost, nothing is lost; health lost, something is lost; time lost, everything is lost. I hope you understand what it means. We can afford to lose wealth because we can always become wealthy again. Health, to some extent, we can regain; but time we cannot recreate. We see

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21 December 2002, Visakhapatnam, India

so many people around us who say, "Tomorrow, I will do it," and then he is gone. Tomorrow never comes. In a real sense, tomorrow rarely comes because, if you don't achieve what you have to achieve today, you are not going to achieve it tomorrow. So the main message is – don't waste time.

Recently, for the last two or three years, I have been watching the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, all these serials. While all these fellows – the Kauravas, the Pandavas, the Kosala *deshavaasis* [inhabitants of Kosala state] – they are all busy fighting, making money and trying for power (like our modern political scene), the people who are really meditating are Brahmadeva, Shiva Bhagvan, Narayan. They are eternally meditating, I don't know why. Every time Brahmadeva comes, he is in his lotus. Then Narada comes. "What, Narada, why have you come?" So people who don't need to meditate are meditating all the time; and people who should be meditating are wasting their time fighting for power, for money, for position, for territory. We see all these things and we say, "Wonderful!"

Lankeshwara came and was gone. What happened to Lankeshwara? Then the second message is – don't ask, achieve. Because we are always asking, "Please give me this, give me that." It's no use. There is the well-known story that Ravana was a great *tapasvi* [one who meditates], and he was a Shiva *bhakta* [devotee]. Shiva appeared and he said, "Ask! What do you want?" And then Ravana said, "I should not be killed by *raakshasa* or *asuras* [demons] or *devas* [gods] or *kinnaras* [demi-gods]." But *nara* [human being] and *vaanara* [monkey] he forgot. He thought they were too small. "I am Lankeshwara. What can a nara do or vaanara do?" So the Lord came as a nara [in human form] – Ramudu. And his *sahaayakaas* [helpers] were all vaanaras. So we don't know what to ask for. We don't know how to ask. So don't ask. What you cannot do properly, you should not do at all. No? Whether it is asking, or giving, or taking or leaving.

Meditation, meditation, meditation. It is always disturbing for me to see people coming a few minutes after we begin meditation. Now those few minutes count. See, this is not like dinner or lunch where, when others are eating *dahi bhaath* [curd rice], you can start with *saambaar* [vegetable stew]. It is not like that. If the train has gone, you cannot catch it. Maybe another train will come. In India we don't know. But one train gone, one train gone. So for every sitting you must be there in the beginning, otherwise it is better to stay at home. If you are thinking you're going to be late, stay at home and sit down and meditate. Now you are neither here nor there. Your prefects should tell you all these things. I'm sure they don't, because they are afraid. "If I tell Lakshmamma, she may not come again – she may leave the Mission," things like that. But Babuji said that it is better to have five lions than a hundred sheep. I mean you have heard this so many times, again and again.

So I am always looking for the lions. And the pity is, there are so many sheep and there are no lions. When are we going to wake up and make use of the time? We don't know how much remains. Babuji Maharaj used to say about one prefect that some abhyasi went to him and he said, "Come tomorrow for a sitting." The abhyasi was very disturbed – some problem, really bad problem. He said, "No, no, I *must* have some solution now." The prefect said, "I am telling you, please come tomorrow morning." Babuji was very angry. He said, "Only God can say, 'Come tomorrow morning,' because God knows He will be there, and God knows whether you will be there or not. No prefect has the right to say, 'Come tomorrow.'" Now it applies to us also. "Start meditation." "I will do tomorrow, sir. Today I have to go shopping." So many things, you know. "I am waiting for the cinema. I promised my daughter to take her to this modern craze – fashion show." Tomorrow may not come. Then what should we do?

You see, only two days back an abhyasi had been very unwell for twelve days, but he recovered. He was hospitalised; he had a minor stroke and he went into a coma, but somehow he recovered. His wife was ill, and so they were taking her to the hospital. They were concerned about the wife. But on the way to the hospital, the abhyasi passed away. Now who could have said who is going to die? He thought he was taking his wife to the hospital, and he went, just like that. So please don't be complacent. "I am only eighteen, sir. I want to live life before I start meditation." You hear this from all young girls, more from young men, who think living life only means *sayanasukham* [luxury of sleep], *bhojanasukham* [luxury of good food], things like that. *Ee prapanchamulo sukham ekkada dorukutundi ante?* [If you ask, where can we find this infinite bliss in this universe?] Dining table-*llo* [At the dining table], bed-*llo* [in bed], *anthe* [that's all].

For this we give our life. *Lopala choodandi* [Look within]. What do you have inside? *Aiswaryam, arogyam* [Wealth, health]. *Aiswaryam enduku, arogyam enduku?* [Why wealth, why health?] Lead a healthy life, *ante*? [means?] So that you must be sexually potent – *andu kosame* [for that only]. But that is not where life is. That is where destruction is. That is where death is. In fact, in one of the foreign countries I visited long ago, every sex act is called a little death. Forgive me for talking about it, but every time you indulge in it, it is a little death. Little death plus little death makes big death. Two plus two makes four. But after that the whole world is running. To make that possible, we have so many vitamins, so many other things to keep me healthy, potent, virile. To make that possible, we need money. All this fraud of making money so that I can live well. "Nice life, sir, my children must come up well." Children are also the product of lust.

Shastra defines children in two ways: *dharmaja* [born out of righteousness] and *kamaja* [born out of lust]. All other *ajas* in Andhra Pradesh are different. *Sarvaprathamam* [the very first] – dharmaja; then kamaja. So the Shastra is very clear about all these things. We don't read the Shastra, we don't listen to elders, we don't practice what we should do and therefore we are praying like this fellow who is rattling away like a frog. It is said in the Shastras that every priest will be born either as a dog or a *thavalai, ante* [means] as a frog. Because they pervert even what little they do. They pervert, they lie in the temple, they cheat the *bhaktas* [devotees], so-called. But I think they are better. They are at least trying to cheat others. We are cheating ourselves. Are you meditating? "*Avunu,* sir. *Appudu, appudu.*" *Appudu, appudu ante*; what is the meaning? *Bhojanam chestunnara?* "*Oh, sariga chestunnanu.*" Meditation *chestunnara*? "*Appudu, appudu. Samayam dorakaledandi. Ayana office-ku velthunnaru, chinnapillane school-ku pampiyyalli. Appudu, appudu.*" ["Yes, sir. Now and then." What is the meaning of 'now and then'? Have you eaten? "Oh, yes. I ate well." Do you meditate? "Now and then. I do not get time. He (husband) has to go to the office, children have to be sent to school. So, now and then..."] Who are you cheating? You are cheating yourself.

Babuji Maharaj told me once, "It is not important about telling lies to others. The important thing is not to tell lies to yourself." Because the more you say, "I am meditating," and you are not doing it, the more you are convincing yourself that you are meditating. Then one day you will say, "Sir, twenty years I have been meditating – twenty years. *Babujigaru undinappude nenu... yemi dorakaledandi inthavarku. Daya cheyandi." Daya enduku? Naku daya oddu. Daya for papis. Ikkada papam ante yemi?* Meditate *cheyyaledu,* cleaning *cheyyaledu,* constant remembrance *cheyyaledu.* But *rozu memu cheptunnam,* prefect *daggara,* Master *daggara, ayana daggara – 'Avunandi, appudu, appudu chestunnanu. Yemi cheyyali, samayam doraka ledu.' Ippudu samayam dorakaledante akkada kooda samayam dorakaledamma. Bhagavanthudu cheptadu* – Babuji Maharaj. [From the time of Babuji... I have not received anything so far. Please have pity on me." Why pity? I do not need pity. Pity is for sinners. Here, what is sin? Not having meditated, not having done the cleaning, not practised constant remembrance, but every time you tell the prefect, tell Master, "Yes, yes. I do it now and then. What to do? I do not get the time." If you do not have the time now, Babuji Maharaj says he will not have time *there.*]

So if you want time *there*, you must give time *here.* What you give, you will get. You give lies, you will get lies; you give bribes in temples, you will get bribes; you give love, you will get love. What you do not give, you can never get.

So that is the final message – give and take. Love God, you get. Love the master, you get love. Remember, neither God nor Master nor anybody exists. This is like the *pratibimbam* [reflection]; what you put, you get. I pray that Babuji Maharaj will bless all of you.

Thank you.

12

Seeing My Self

Dear brothers and sisters,

(I have always to remind the prefects that it is my centre.) [Applause]

After a good sitting, there should be a feeling of intoxication, spiritual intoxication. What do you say in Telugu for intoxication? *Mathu, divya mathu!* So normally one should not disturb that condition by coming out immediately, talking about politics, about so many other things. And even a speech is normally not welcome, at least to the speaker, because he doesn't want to disturb his own condition.

Anyway brother Bikshamgaru told you about how even *avatara purushas* [divine incarnations] needed gurus. In fact, everybody needs a guru. Kabir, the great saint, has said, "*Guru bina kachchu na paaye*" – without a guru you can get nothing. Nothing *ante* [means] *paralokapraapti kosaram* [for attaining the

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22 December 2002, Rajahmundry, India

Brighter World], not here. Here your samskara gives you what you have to get. Nobody can change it. So in our physical life, material life (*laukika* life), our samskaras are acting all the time – giving, taking, making us happy, making us sad, putting somebody [in the role of] a chief minister, somebody pulling a rickshaw. That cannot change at all. Ashtavakra could not change his physical form, though he could change his inner self into that of a very great saint. So we must know the limitation of our physical life, of the teachers who teach us to live here in this *bhoolokam, mrityulokam* [earth, mortal world], to achieve whatever we have to achieve – professors, philosophers – that is one category. As far as spirituality is concerned, only the guru can do something for us, because spiritual life is not conditioned or limited by samskaras.

Now all traditions say that when we are born, anybody, whether it is Rama or Krishna or Bikshamgaru, Parthasarathi, anybody you see, Raghavan, we are all born with a divine consciousness which existed before birth but which is erased when we are born into the bhooloka. To renew that consciousness, to make us aware that there is a different life, higher life, a spiritual life – an *aadhyaatmik jeevanamu*, as you say, is the guru's function. In ritualistic Hinduism it is called *upanayana* [sacred thread ceremony], but it doesn't work. Because unless the guru who does your upanayana and gives you the *upadesha* [teaching] of the Mahagayatri mantra has achieved a certain spiritual elevation, he cannot do anything except mutter into your ears the mantra itself. So this ritualistic upanayana is a failure. Because today, you must believe this and understand this clearly, no *shastri* [priest], no pundit exists who can give you the upadesha from heart to heart; only from mouth to *karna* [ear]. Similarly temple worship may have been useful once upon a time. It depends on the worshipper. It depends on the object worshipped. If it is an idol in a temple, something called *prana pratishta* [infusion of spiritual force into the idol] has to be done before that *murti* [idol] becomes worshipable. Otherwise it is only a piece of art. You can buy it from a handicrafts emporium. It is not to be worshipped. But our tradition has been so degraded that even a picture of Hanuman, scrawled on a wall by a child, you go and worship it.

We have become totally ignorant of the traditions, of the values which were existing, maybe in the Dvapara Yuga, or the Treta Yuga, but which certainly don't exist in the Kali Yuga at all. Today there is nobody, absolutely, who can do a prana pratishta to a *vigraha* [idol], who can do upadesha to a *shishya* [disciple]. So mantras are useless, tantras are useless. *Aachaaram, anushtaanam* [observances and rituals] all are useless. Even yoga is only for physical health. *Yama, niyama, asana, pranayama* [limbs of Patanjali's yoga] – over! "I am doing pranayama, sir." Good! Your lungs will expand; some psychic problems

may arise and then you'll need a psychiatrist. Asana – good! Physical health. You must remember what Babuji Maharaj answered when I questioned him about asanas. He said, in the olden days, the rishis had to do meditation almost continuously, sitting in meditation. They could not go walking or jogging or play tennis or go swimming. So they evolved a system of asana so that the positions are changed even while they are meditating, and some physical health, psychic health is maintained. That is all. That is the limitation of what you call hatha yoga.

So if you look at it sensibly, all that we have incurred, all that we have inherited as a yogic tradition, as a *sampradaayic* tradition – as a cultural tradition, are today useless, except to play on the stage like drama. We can have Ramayana on the stage. We can play Krishnudu [Lord Krishna] on the stage. N.T. Rama Rao did it with great success, but he never became Rama or Krishna. It is like children playing with *bommalu* [toys]. Rama Rao did it with great credibility because the people before whom he was playing were emotional, satisfied with drama – with *naatakam*. They did not look for anything more. They never expected a real Rama. Anybody dressed as Rama, and talking like Rama, they are happy. "*Hanumantha, raa ikkada.* [Hanumantha, come here.]" Hanumanthudu came. "*Ravanudu ippudu yekkada?* [Where is Ravana now?]" "*Ayana visramam chesthunnaru.* [He is resting.]" "Oh!" Finished.

So people of Andhra Pradesh especially – you will excuse my saying it, but it is a fact; it is not a criticism, it is an observation – are subject to a lot of emotional *moodha bhakti* [blind faith]. Now I have been travelling from Visakhapatnam up to here, and I have seen maybe sixty or seventy of these Hanumantha statues; big – twenty feet, thirty feet, forty feet. Nobody seems to bother about it. I don't know why they are there. Good sculpture. It is useful to answer foreigners when they come and say, "Oh, one more monkey god? How many do you have in India?" So apart from that there is no importance to these things. In every village there is a Kali temple. There is a Vishnu temple with a Nandi [sacred bull, vehicle of Lord Shiva] on the outside. Now Vishnu is not supposed to have Nandi as a *vahana* [vehicle]. There are Shiva temples with Hanuman outside. *Chaala* [a lot of] confusion! People don't know what they are worshipping, whom they are worshipping, why they are worshipping. Why they worship is because they have a fear that "if I don't worship, something may happen."

Have you ever asked yourself the question, "I have been worshipping these so-called gods and goddesses all my life. Nothing in my life has changed. If my husband is a drunkard, he continues to be drunk. If he beats me, he continues to beat me. If my children are disobedient, they are still continuing to be disobedient. If I am happy with the saris and jewellery, I am happy with saris and jewellery. I have not changed, they have not changed, nothing in this *prapancham* [universe] has changed because of my worship. Why should I worship?" Have you asked yourself? "*Naa chinna kalam nunchi chesthunnanu,* sir. [I am doing it from my childhood, Sir.] *Maa thaathagaru, maa nayanagaaru…* [My grandfather, my father…]" They have gone. If you could contact them today and see where they are, you would be shocked. Because let me tell you, this worship did not take them to *swargaloka* [heaven] or any other loka. They went where they deserved. And most of us know where that is. I am not saying this to disrespect anybody's *thathayya* or *nayana* [grandfather or father]. It is a fact. If I get into a train from Madras to Visakhapatnam, I can go only to Visakhapatnam. I cannot go to Calcutta or Delhi or anywhere else. So doing what we are doing, living as we are living, believing what we are believing, where else can we go except to a particular destination which I do not want to name? There is no other choice. It's a one-way street going only from here to there, for the enormous majority of human beings.

There may be one in a hundred thousand million souls which escapes out of this because of either guru *kataaksha* [grace] or some shock which awakens it into a reality which is not available as long as we are happy and contented. Suddenly we are shocked. "What happened? I am thirty-two, my wife is twenty-seven. She died of cancer. I have three young children of five, six and seven." We make the mistake of immediately becoming *naastikas* [atheists]. "*Ekkadayya bhagavanthudu?* [Where is God?]" We become like Hiranyakashipu. From *moodha bhakti* to *asura bhavana* [blind faith to demonical attitude] – this is the transition. Now there is no more God for me. "*Voddayya.* [I don't want it.]" No temples. "*Anthaa abadham. Ekkadayya mee devudu, choopinchu*? [All lies, all untrue. Where is your God? Show me.]" I cannot say like Prahlad, "Kick this and see where He is." Because that would bring terrible chaos into this world. So shocks are very good, if you can accept the shock in the right way. But hopefully, if you pray properly, we don't need shocks, because as Kabir says, "If you have known God when you are happy, you don't need sorrow." No? Everybody prays when there is sorrow and unhappiness. Had you but prayed when you were happy, joyful, why should you need sorrow to awaken you?

So our samskaras are created by ourselves, to remind ourselves that when we come into this world, an automatic system must work within me, which if I permit it to work without distraction, from the senses, from my desire, they will lead me in the right way, through joy, through suffering, to my goal in this life itself. If I could only find a sensible human being – had I been a sensible human being who permitted my samskaras to act without my interference caused by my desire, I would not have needed a guru. Let me tell you this with hundred percent accuracy, conviction, faith. Guru comes only to those who are not permitting their samskaras to work, samskaras which they have created for themselves, very much like a computer program, that I will be born, let us say like Gautama. I will be a prince, I will marry a princess, I will have a child, I will see a sick man, a dead person being carried to the *ghat* [burial ground], et cetera, and I will awaken and I will come. I will leave my wife and child in the middle of the night and walk out and become Buddha. No desire, no attachment. He became the Buddha. Who was Buddha's guru? Nobody knows. He did not need because in his pre-life existence, he had planned that 'this and this and this shall happen, so that this must happen, and I shall leave this world as an evolved soul' – call it nirvana, call it *swarga* [heaven], call it what you will – Brighter World.

So with the small exception of those people who don't need a guru because they permit their samskaras to operate without distraction, without disturbance, without deviation by "my desires" – for everybody else, they need a guru, because such people are rare. Why are they rare? Because if I have carved out a future of suffering for myself, I rebel against suffering. I see everybody enjoying; I desire enjoyment, I desire pleasure. So I do things which I should not do, which will affect the operation of my samskaras as planned. It is like I am travelling in a passenger train, and I see a fast train going somewhere else, beautiful blue paint, gleaming new locomotive, and I leave my train and get into that and go somewhere else. Good food, air-conditioned, but destination wrong. Is the story any better in the West? Not at all. Because not only they don't believe in samskaras, but they think they are the masters of their own destiny. "I am the master of my destiny!" Of course you are. But then you must achieve that mastery to master your destiny. Without mastering, how can you be a master? You can be a Master of Philosophy, only when you have studied Philosophy to such an extent that the degree of Master of Philosophy is bestowed on you. You cannot just go around and say, "I am Master of Philosophy, I am Master of Psychology, I am Master of Medicine." Isn't it?

So their situation is perhaps even more deplorable, more to be regretted by us, because while we know we are doing wrong, going after *bangaru* [gold]… Even in Tirupati, we are only admiring the *bangaru kireetam* [golden crown], forgetting the *Devudu* [God] inside. We stand for twenty hours in the *dharma-seva* [free service] queue, and before you can even enter the *garbhagruha* [sanctum sanctorum], *"Pondi, pondi, pondi.* [Go, go, go.]" You have a thirty-second exposure to God after a twenty-hour wait under miserable circumstances, herded like pigs through pens, and this is *yatra* [pilgrimage]. *"Edukondala Swaami.* [Lord of the Seven Hills.] *Devuda! Govinda!" Ekkada*

Govinda? [Where is God?] Why do you go there? Twenty hours had you meditated continuously, you can perhaps, stand up and be a saint. You have no faith. We prefer to go there, be cheated by robbers, cheated by everybody, cheated by bus drivers, conductors, cheated by the *purohit* [priest], given rubbish as *laddus* [sweets].

Once a minister of Andhra Pradesh Government came to my house in Madras, with *laddu prasadam* [sweet offered to the deity], and it was all rotten. A *mantri* [minister] – Pidathala Ranga Reddy – he was Finance Minister. And Finance Minister gets a laddu like that! Have you understood what is happening in your temples? Of course, every so often, the Executive Officer makes a new rule, changes the size of the laddu, changes the price of the laddu, but the quality of the laddu is always the same. And we take it as prasad. Now prasad, according to the Vedic Shastra, should take away all your troubles, illnesses, everything. "*Prasaade sarva duhkhaanaam haanirasya upajaayate* [In tranquillity all his sorrow is destroyed]," says the Bhagavad Gita. *Sarva duhkhaanaam* – you take a little prasad, all your *dukhaas* [sorrows] should vanish. You eat that laddu and you only get stomach-ache, diarrhoea, and we still believe in it. "*Endukante, Aayana ichinarandi, poojari iyyaledu, saakshaath Govindudu ichchesinaru, brahmalokam nunchi, devalokam nunchi, akkada pavithramga, atuvanti chaala pavithram chesi,* *akkadi nunchi direct ga bhakthudi karamulo ichchesinaru – Theesuko.* [It is not the priest who has given it. The Lord Govinda himself directly from the cosmic world, heavenly abode, has given this most holy prasad into the hands of the devotee.]"

So Andhra Pradesh is awful in this respect, and it's a money making institution – Tirupati Devasthanam, everybody knows. Crores of rupees are going because fools like us go and put our money in the *hundi* [donation box], isn't it? I was once very shocked when Dr. Varadachari commented about Tirupati. One prefect, I don't want to name him, because he is no more, he came to see Dr. Varadachari when I was sitting there. And after a few minutes, he took leave of Dr. Varadachari. He said, "Where are you going?" He said, "No, sir, I am going to the temple." "Hmm! You are going to that fellow who ran after women and he had to take a loan from Kubera [the Lord of wealth] and he cannot even pay the interest?" *Idi mee sampradayam.* [This is your belief.] I am not saying anything new. He said, "What do you think he will give you? He is waiting for you to give him some money so that he can pay another instalment to Kubera." This is the truth. Of course you can say, "This is all *divya naatakam* [divine drama]." *Divya naatakam ante* this is also divya naatakam. [If that is a divine drama, this is also a divine drama.] No? That I am here is a naatakam [illusion]. I am not here. Where am I?

I am a universal soul, free like the soul that is the Brahma soul, the cosmic soul. Why am I bound? Because I think I am in this body, I am a slave of my body, I am imprisoned in my body, I am a slave of my bodily desires for pleasure, for satisfaction, for comfort, therefore I am bound. Nothing binds me. In this *prapancham* [universe], nothing can bind me unless I bind myself. This is true for every one of you, from the lowest to the highest, from the *chandala* [outcaste] to the Brahmin of the highest quality. We are all bound. How to release ourselves? Guru *kataaksham* [grace], of course – but we have to meditate and see that as an inner light, lose our body-consciousness, and then we find that this liberation was always there. I am a fool because, I have bound myself and I am telling everybody, "Let me go, let me go. Liberate *cheyyandi.* [Please liberate me.]" Who will liberate?

You must all have read that small story that Babuji told me about the parrot. Have you read it? Read it again. A little advice was all that it was asking for. This rich man in Arabia had this beautiful parrot in a golden cage, and he would not let it go. One day he was going to India, and it said, "O Master, I have many relatives in India, all over India. Will you please ask them how they are, convey my greetings to them, and please ask them for advice how I can be liberated?" So he went to India and toured for six months forgetting the parrot, but just before he was leaving, there was a mango grove and a lot of parrots. He suddenly remembered his promise. So he asked a parrot, "O parrot, I have a beautiful parrot at home in a golden cage. It asked me to ask you how it can be liberated." The moment the parrot heard this question, it fell dead. He said, "*Ayyo Devuda* [O my God], what have I done?" And he became very sad. So when he came back to his palace in Arabia, it asked him, "Master, did you ask this question?" He said, "What to say, I am very sorry about it, my dear parrot." So the parrot said, "What happened? Did you ask or not?" "Yes, I asked the parrot this question. It immediately fell dead. I am so sorry." His parrot fell dead inside the cage. So he became very sorry. "I have not killed one, I have killed two parrots." So with great sorrow, he opened the door of the cage, took out the parrot, and threw it away, and it flew away. So we have to fly away ourselves. And this advice is the guru.

Guru is not going to take you physically and put you in some *loka* [world] of your imagination, where you can still have your *bhaarya* [wife], your *bhartha* [husband] and your *bangaaru* [gold; also used to address children lovingly]. Not at all; bhaaryas and bharthas are here. There is no bhaarya, no bhartha there. This *attachment* has to go – my children, my wife, my husband, no? "My *kshetram* [city]; my *Andhra Pradesamu*, my Kakinada" *Ekkada* 'my Kakinada'? – Where is your Kakinada? Can you tell me? So forget all this foolishness. Andhra people are wonderful people because they have this inner aspiration for truth. But they have not the courage to follow it. So you have to become as Babuji Maharaj said, lions. Don't say *mehehheheh*... No? You know that story of Ramakrishna. A lion gave birth to a cub in a field where there was a flock of sheep, and the mother lion died. So these sheep brought up this lion-cub like a sheep, and it went around eating grass and mehehheheh, mehehheheh, all the time. And three years later, even though it was a big lion, it was still a sheep. One day a lion came, a giant lion. He said, "What is this nonsense? A lion among sheep?" It took him by the scruff here, put him in a pond and said, "Look!" Grrrrrr! Because he saw himself.

The *sakshatkara* [Reality] in even the *dhyana paddhati* [system of meditation], in this *adhyatmika paddhati* [system of spirituality], is sakshatkara – is seeing my Self. Not seeing some foolish god here [pointing to heart]. We are not Hanumans to open our chest and show Rama, Sita and Lakshmana here. You people here are famous for [having the name of] Ramalakshmamma. Every third woman in Andhra Pradesh is a Ramalakshmamma. Why these composite names? So, if I open my heart, I must see my Self, which is my Eternal Divine Soul.

So please give up all foolishness, get into the practice wholeheartedly, forget *sampradaaya* [tradition], *praacheena kala* [olden times], the *thaathagaru* [grandfather] and *nayanagaaru* [father], et cetera. They lived their life. You must live your life. And if you live your life properly, you can even help your *thatha* [grandfather] and your *nayana* [father], wherever they may be. I pray that Babuji Maharaj will bless all of you.

13

Use the Heart to Change the Heart

Somebody used the word 'victory', *vijaya-yatra.* I do not accept victory because I do not accept defeat. The real meaning is that in any situation where there is harmony and peace, there is neither defeat nor victory. I have often heard people discussing concepts of marriage, mundane subjects like marriage, and they say sometimes the wife is victorious, sometimes the husband is victorious. Is it a battlefield? Marriage is not a battlefield, you know, where one should be victorious and the other concedes defeat. So victory and defeat are the two opposites, extreme opposites, of a situation which should not exist. Where peace and harmony reign there is only peace and harmony. No victory, no defeat.

So I would not like you to think of anything as victorious. The only victory I am willing to concede or to accept, or to accept from all of you, is victory over the self, because that is really a problem. I was seeing

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23 December 2002, Vijayawada, India

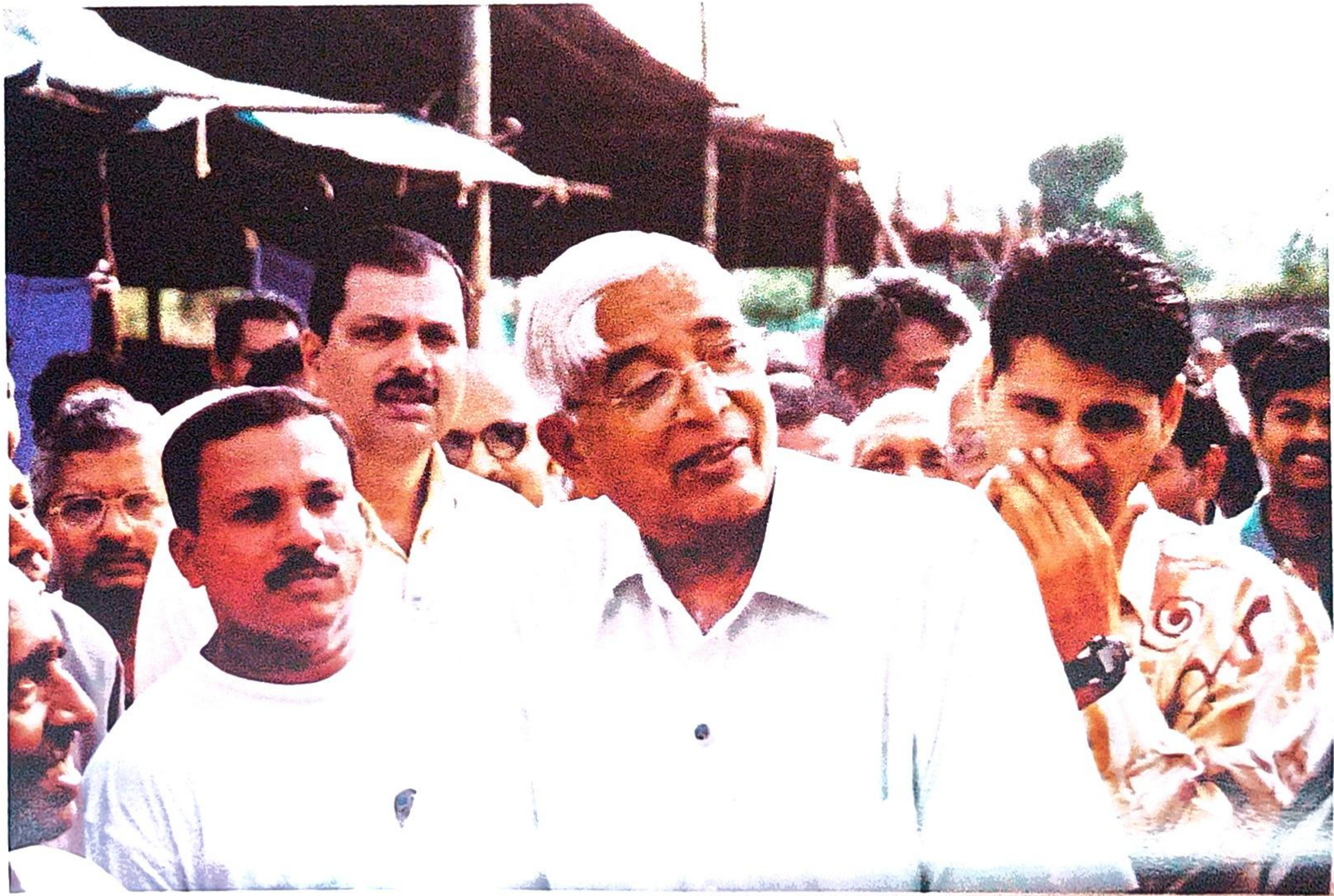
a cartoon yesterday – *I, me and myself* – as if two are not enough; me and myself. I, me and myself. Now, where is the problem about this victory over the self? Trying to proceed along the lines of my talk yesterday, I think in Rajahmundry, the real fight within us is between what we want and what we need, desire opposed to wisdom. I made a suggestion yesterday that if we would be born and allow our samskaras to operate without creating any more samskaras, that is the important thing. No more samskaras to be created from birth to death. That death would be a liberation, which means cessation of all desire, accepting what comes as my due – what I have earned in my past by my thoughts, by my actions – accepting this life as a reward for something I did in my past life, whether that reward be in the form of poverty and suffering and disease, or affluence, comfort and luxury. We must never forget that everything that happens to us is happening as a result of samskaras.

Buddha, Gautama the Buddha, said the same thing – cut the chain of desire and you are in *nirvana.* But we have to try to understand how eliminating desire can benefit us. This needs a great deal of introspection, because that introspection itself is the first step for the way to renunciation. This word 'renunciation' is to me anathema. I don't like it because of its popular connotation, that I have to give up everything I have, sell off my property, give up my friends and everything like that, walk into the street. To me, renunciation means renunciation of desire. I will no longer accept desire as a part of my life. Because desire is something which I think sprouts from the ego. It wants and wants and wants. When it wants something, and if the intelligence cooperates with my ego, my sense of right and wrong, my sense of ethicality and morality undergoes aberrations – undergoes, shall we say, a certain acceptance – telling me, "This situation is appropriate." And the word 'appropriate' is quite a dangerous thing because it does not say whether it is right or wrong.

I will tell you a small story about a man who was running naked after a girl on a railway platform, let us say in Victoria, London. He was caught, obscene behaviour, attempting so and so and so and so. But when the court convened, he pleaded that he was in the daydream and he was dressed appropriate to the pursuit. I mean, the British will probably understand this better than most of us because it is a joke and it is not a joke. Because in a situation where you and your, you know, lover must unite, there must be nothing in between. But does it mean that on a station platform, running after a girl, you can be naked? So the word 'appropriate' is a very, shall I say, very convenient term to assuage our conscience and say, "Well, after all, I did what was appropriate. Whether it is right or wrong, I don't know. " This is the excuse, the pleading of many officers of the Nazi regime when they were caught and tried for war crimes. Their plea was, "I had to obey an order. In obeying an order should I think of ethicality and morality as coming behind that order?"

There have been institutions in India where the guru said, "Kill that person." He was killed. Obedience to the guru. There are instances in our Puranas where a mother told five brothers, when one of them had married a girl and they joyfully announced from outside the house, "Mummy, mummy, look what we have brought!" And mother said, "All of you enjoy it equally." And they did. And their excuse was, "We have to obey our mother." *Matru bhakti* [devotion to one's mother]! They never bothered about what is right or wrong. And it is very unfortunate that the mother did not say, "For heaven's sake, you brought a girl along. How can all of you enjoy?" "No, no, mummy, you said so." "Nonsense, don't be stupid." She did not say it either. She was pleased that her sons were obedient. Sometimes I wish I had a mother like that [laughter]! Isn't it? We all wish sometimes that the law would expand a little or contract a little in our favour, and moral values could be changed, shifted according to our desires. Nothing wrong. In the old days in my school they used to say, "When skin touches skin, there is no sin."

There are so many convenient interpretations of the law that we indulge in, all beneficial, or at least so we think, to the self. Now, nothing benefits the self where it is a transgression, because my heart knows



what I am doing. My mind may say, "Chari, everybody is doing it; there is nothing wrong if you are doing it. Who has not kissed a girl? Who has not slept with another woman? Who has not tasted a brandy?" But this damn thing here – *dub, dub, dub*; beating away – *wrong, wrong, wrong, wrong, wrong, wrong, wrong, wrong*. The mantra is here [pointing to the heart], not *aham brahmasmi*. [I am Brahman.] That is not the mantra. The real mantra that is governing my life is my heart beating away, beat by beat, saying, "Wrong, wrong. Wrong, wrong. Wrong, wrong." And where does it lead me eventually? To illness, to the doctor, eventually perhaps to the grave. A life full of guilt – that is what we call it.

Guilt is not decided, nor can it ever be decided, by intelligence. Guilt is a matter which concerns the heart; it concerns wisdom. Wisdom is not intelligence. You may produce seven degrees – two from Oxford, two from Yale, two from I don't know where else, Harvard – and yet be a stupid ass as far as controlling your own life is concerned. The most intelligent people have been the most devastating fools, many of whom have committed suicide. I mean, I have read about so many European philosophers who have committed suicide, and for me it has always been a matter of wonder: How on earth can a philosopher commit suicide? It does not make sense. Where was his philosophy? What was his philosophy? I used to worship, almost, Hermann Hesse, the author of

Siddhartha (the only one of his books which is well known). And when I heard finally in his last novel – where his own character is portrayed as falling into a lake and trying to swim and dying – that he himself committed suicide, it was a profound shock to me.

So you see, this thing, this monitor, this is the monitor of our life. You have a classroom monitor in school. You have a monitor in your computer. And this [the heart] is the monitor of each one's life. Every one of you has a heart, not only to circulate blood, which is the physiological thing, you see. And whether it is necessary I do not know, because when you have scientific possibilities like suspended animation, cryogenic suspension of animation – you read in science fiction novels that you are cooled down almost to, what shall we say, absolute zero and pushed off in a space vehicle to be animated after four hundred thousand years on some other planet – the heart is not really necessary for physiological existence.

So, why on earth did God give you a heart? To decide questions, vital questions, existential questions of right and wrong, what I should do and what I should not do, whether I should do it or not do it. You know, starting in the Bible from the story of Cain and Abel, this story has been haunting humankind. "God, what should I do?"

In the Christian tradition, in the Hebraic tradition, we have a convenient God who may have said, "My son, do what you *have* to do." In the Indian tradition we have a God who says, "In this situation, if you desire such- and-such an end, this is what you have to do." He brings in the question of desire. Again and again in the Mahabharata, Arjuna faces a complex situation, an emotional situation, a situation full of this question of morality, absolute morality. "Should I kill or not?" His own guru, his own grandfather, his own brothers. Krishna does not say yes or no. Note carefully, he does not say no, he does not say yes. He says, "Arjuna, if you want to win, you have to do this." Now it is for Arjuna to decide. He could have got off the chariot and walked away, free in his conscience – losing the war but free in his conscience. Isn't it? So God never gives answers. Remember this. People go to church like hell, if I may say so, and pray on their knees again and again. Nothing comes. Why? Because it is not His function to advise us. He has given us a heart and a brain – a heart to tell us what is right, a brain to decide to do it. And we have to do it. It is like you give a child aged five, six or seven a pen or a pencil, and it says, "Mummy, how should I write?" You can show it once, twice. After that he has to write or she has to write.

So God says, "You are not an animal, you are not an insect, you are not a reptile, you are not a fish. I have created you in my image." So says the Bible. "And having been created in my image, I expect you to use the faculties I have already implanted in you, sent you down with. Think, decide, do." This is the message of the Divine. And when we wail and beat our breasts and say, "Oh, I don't know what to do in this situation, please advise me," it is because of one simple feature alone – that knowing what I ought to do, I desire to do something else. There is no other conflict in human beings, absolutely not. I repeat: we know what we have to do; we want to do something else. *Voila,* as the French say – a complex situation, a situation fraught with danger, difficulties, devastations. The solution is obvious. Don't *want* to do something; do what you *have* to do. Remember that the heart is the only, what shall we say, instrument on which we can depend to answer this question. Therefore my master, Babuji Maharaj, said, "When in doubt refer to the heart." A simple solution, seven words. Who follows it? We don't follow it.

We are very eager to show our prowess, which is a manifestation of our ego. "My importance." "I want to annex the neighbouring territory. Very easy." Consequence? Devastation; millions – perhaps billions – of people dead. Who cares? "War cannot be won without bloodshed. War cannot be won without devastation, possibly fifty years of atomic fallout. It is the price we have to pay." This is the glib answer that our government, our politicians give us. And we, like tamed sheep, toothless sheep (of course sheep have no teeth, except to chew grass), we follow. And then all that the leader has to do is to come and stand on a platform and make a belligerent speech, firing up your emotions, like your cinemas fire up your emotions in another way.

Only yesterday a college girl was telling me in the car, when she was coming with me, what to do about these obscenities that are now shown on the movies. You know the movies have terrible things – sex, violence – more and more of them, less and less of cultural values, less and less of goodness. That is why you see children toting big guns and *dadadadada.* Like that they go around, and the mummy is proud – "Oh, my darling" – she hugs him and kisses him. So I told her there is only one solution to this problem. Don't go to the movies. You cannot change the movies, you cannot change the actors, you cannot change the greed of the public for vicarious enjoyment which they are denied; what the psychologists call suppression. Why do you go to such movies and take pleasure in rape and murder and general mayhem? Because you are not able to do it yourself. This is psychological truth; it is the truth, it is the wisdom of probing into the mind and deciding why and wherefore this and this and this happens. So if you don't want excitation from outside, to excite your own latent desire in the form of samskaras, avoid it. But we don't want to avoid it. We want the government to change the policies, government to decree what sort of films should be shown, and allow them the body of public opinion which says, "Should the people not have the freedom to see what they want to see?" – which is why pornographic films exist, pornographic theatres exist; which is what makes people condone, for instance, homosexual marriages {such as} when a church in Atlanta performed the marriage of a couple, claiming that it is a fundamental human right to marry whom you will!

So you see, degradation, if it is condoned, will only multiply into further degradation. Snowball effect they call it. Somewhere we have to put a stop. And who is to put the stop? The individual. No government cares a damn about its people. No government, whether it is the British or the American or the Indian. They care only for self-survival. "How long can I remain the prime minister? When can I have re-election? How can I have re-election? Throw the dog a bit of meat."

So don't expect governments to do it, don't expect political leaders to do it, don't expect even religious leaders to do it. Depend on yourself. If you want to change society, you are the first instrument of change in society. And how to do it? Change yourself first. So, you see, the ball is very much back in your court. If you want a moral, sin-free, violence-free, secure existence, secure it in your home. Then think of others. After all, they say charity begins at home. It is not selfish. You understand?

So my message to you is, forget victory because victory comes with defeat, defeat comes with victory.

A war may be won, but a nation may be lost and people may be devastated; for a hundred years there may be poverty and sickness which nobody can relieve, not even God. We do not think of victory and defeat. We think of harmony, of benevolence, of benefaction, and the way to that is only by individual change, change of heart. Use the heart to change the heart. Therefore we meditate on the heart. Therefore we clean the heart of its tendencies. Please give this pursuit your entire time and attention. I do not mean that you should sit in meditation twenty-four hours, like the old rishis. We cannot do it because we have to earn a living. But if you restrict your needs, you need less and less money. If you expand your needs, you need more and more money.

So the first law is, restrict your needs. When you bring it down to the minimum, then you will see you have a lot of leisure time. You don't have to worry so much about promotions. You don't have to worry about how you can get over the shoulders of another who is obstructing your promotion. You don't have to climb, as they say, over corpses. Restrict your needs, your needs even for money become less and less. You have more and more time. You can think of better things than just eating pizza and pasta. It seems to be a modern craze now in India, thanks to Pizza Hut. Even in small places like Vijayawada I am sure there is a Pizza Hut. Why do you do it? Because you dial and they deliver. Death is the easiest – dial and they bring in the hearse to carry you out.

So please restrict your desires, restrict your wants, depend only on what you need. I need food, I don't need caviar and smoked haddock and smoked herring, whatever. I am always told that saints, even up in Mount Athos, that famous monastery, they eat bread and cheese and drink cold water and they are surviving, year after year, decade after decade, up on top of a mountain – no road, they are pulled up by baskets. So you see, simple living is easy living, easy living is moral living, moral living is beneficial living. Such a life is ennobling. Ennobling means it is taking me up and up towards the goal, which you can easily achieve merely by practice of meditation and cleaning, which is a self-fuelling cycle. The more I meditate, the more I clean, the more simple I become, the less I need. So don't look upon meditation as something to do for half an hour, something like that.

The attitude of meditation is a permanent life. Whatever I do, constant remembrance is nothing but trying to remain in a certain state of consciousness which exists, or which you are able to create, during meditation – and to prolong it in your daily life. It is a very important element of our spiritual practice and it should not be neglected. Not like one American boy who told Babuji, "I practice constant remembrance several times a day." Constant remembrance means *constant* remembrance – *nirantara smarana.* Where is the *nirantara*? "*Appudu, appudu, chesthunnaru, Swamiji,*" *ante,* [In saying, "Every now and then I do, sir."] there is no meaning.

So I recommend Sahaj Marg – a very simple practice, very refined, which means all unnecessary things have been removed from it. It is a very simple, a very refined, easily practicable practice. Do it with faith, do it with devotion, knowing that you are serving yourself and nobody else.

Thank you.

14

Ashram: A Meditation Place

Christ was not a Christian. After Christ was born and died, Christianity came into being. Buddha was not a Buddhist; he was a Hindu. After he preached and he had a large following and he had attained *mahaparinirvana* [the great liberation of the Buddha], what they followed became Buddhism. Even Mohammed was not a Muslim. What he preached, after he passed away, became Islam. So they did not found these religions. Their followers created these religions. [Applause]

Do not clap before you listen. This is one of the problems of modern life. We appreciate everything before we get something and then we find we have got rubbish. Brother has said I should give a short speech.

I would like to congratulate all those who are responsible for this, what should I say, imposing ashram. It will be complete very soon and I thank

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25 December 2002, Ongole, India

all of those who have made it possible to build such a lovely place.

Now we must make sure that it is properly used. It must not ever become so many things. It must not become a temple. It must not become a place of worship. It must not become a place of strife and tension. It must remain what it is, a meditation place. It is for you all to ensure that it is properly used. And how do you do it? By using it properly yourself. It applies to all our ashrams everywhere, that they should be used wisely for the purpose which we have in mind.

I am told this will be completed by February. So maybe we shall see it again next year sometime. And I am sure you all feel very hot under the tent and you have been sitting here long enough. So I'll wish you all a happy Christmas, a happy new year, and a happy spiritual life.

Thank you.

15

A Glimpse into Spiritual Life

Dear brothers and sisters,

I have often been fond of the river as a simile for spiritual life. Some of you who have read my past lectures know about this. But nowadays when I see the rivers are dry, no water in them, I wonder what is going to happen to our own river, which is life. Life is eternal, of course. And the brief periods when we become conscious of it, I suppose – in my limited experience – the brief period when we become conscious of existence is when we are here in a physical body and become conscious of life. But as Babuji Maharaj said, consciousness does not determine life. It is life which determines consciousness. So in that sense, life is eternal, and occasionally we become conscious, when the instrument for consciousness is given to us, so that we can do something, achieve something – more important, *become* something. So

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life as we know of it in this terrestrial life, human life – it has always been an opportunity for becoming, as opposed to having.

In our modern life, the emphasis is on having. Having more and more – having more houses, more possessions, more cars, more wealth, more power. It is an acquisitive life, acquiring things, whereas spirituality says if you use this life properly, you become something higher and higher. In that sense life is a school, with this difference – that all the time should be devoted to school and not some of the time devoted to school, like in the life of children, college-goers.

I heard somebody talking this morning of a sense of responsibility, somebody else talking of something else, of power consciousness. Of course they are all there. But that is the aberrant part of life, when we forget the main purpose and try to fulfil what Babuji would call the baser purposes of life, which are satisfaction, pleasure, acquisition. Three things. Now in our Vedic inheritance, there is mention of the *purusharthas*, the four purusharthas. Purushartha means *artha* for being a *purusha* – meaning for being born. Why are we here? And there are *dharma*, *artha, kama* and *moksha*. According to the Vedic lore, once we are born, once we acquire a physical form, we have to live, we have to breathe, we have to eat, we have to propagate. But dharma must be the base, the foundation; that is, right breathing, right eating, right means of propagation, procreation, whatever it is.

So dharma must control all our activities. Perhaps it is with this idea that you have the idea of *pranayama* [the regulation of the vital force] and *asana* [posture] in the ashtanga yoga. Right breathing – pranayama. Right action in the sense of bodily movement – hatha yoga, various asanas. But that is only one part of it because, according to Babuji Maharaj, that alone is not enough. Dharma alone is not enough. Artha we need, which is to earn something to live – which artha must be controlled by dharma, a dharmic earning, what Babuji used to call rightful earning. Kama, as I said, fulfilment of desire, again with the base of dharma – therefore marriage, therefore sanctification of spiritual unions. But the final purushartha is moksha, that is, liberation. It is presupposed that if we have lived a life of dharma, earning rightfully, living in the proper way, moksha is more or less a certain ending to your life. That means you do not reappear here on the scene again. *Mukti* is what moksha means. So dharma, artha, kama, moksha.

The relevance I find in this to Sahaj Marg is – Sahaj Marg emphasises that we have to live a family life, not a life of renunciation. Sahaj Marg does not preach renunciation, no *sannyasa* here. *Vairagya* [non-attachment] inside, but not outside. Here we have more the sense of a balanced existence, no extremes. Dharma also, I think, never meant to go into extremes. Right does not mean that there is only right, because if there was only right, there would be no need to mention it at all. Right cannot exist without wrong. Virtue cannot exist without sin. Day cannot exist without night. So in our *bhoutika jeevanam* (the worldly life), there is always this play of two opposites, and how to balance them is our main concern.

We have seen in past cultures in India that people renounced everything, went away to jungles and forests renouncing life. You cannot renounce life. You are alive. You are able to talk of renunciation only because you are alive. You can renounce certain features of life but you cannot renounce life itself. Even when you attempt suicide, and if you succeed, you have not renounced life. You have only made a change in your own present condition, a rather disastrous change, which is not going to have any effect other than a deleterious, bad effect on your future existence. So suicide is no solution to the problems of life. In fact, it magnifies the problems enormously and your future existence – if and when you appear here again – will be already corrupted by that act of suicide, so that you are born with a negative balance in your ledger, more samskaras to work off. Because spiritually speaking, to take life is a sin, whether it is the other's life or your own life. There is a German term for suicide, I think it is self-murder, which means murdering the self. So whether you murder somebody else or yourself, it is murder, and therefore it is a crime, it is a sin. You cannot say, "It is my life, I will take it." No. If you extend that argument a little further, you say, "She is my wife, I can do what I like with her." You cannot. You say, "This is my house, I can explode it, burn it, destroy it." No, you cannot. Even to destroy your house you need today permission of the government, whether it is municipality, corporation or the so-called Tamil Nadu Board. You cannot demolish without permission. You have a right to build; you have no right to destroy. Even Christ says, "I have not come to destroy, but to fulfil." Destruction, any fool can do. You don't need intelligence, you don't need awareness. We have the modern problem with the Naxalites, with the terrorists, the Al-Qaeda, you see. They are full of intelligent people but, unfortunately, what they are doing is wrong. It is criminal, it is antisocial and it is, most importantly, against their own self-interest, spiritually speaking, materially speaking too. Because if they are caught… that's why they run away.

So we have to be able to balance the tendencies, the needs, the need for material life, together with the need for spiritual life. Which should be given predominance? It depends. You see, like a man who is walking on a tightrope, he is not walking perfectly straight all the time. He is moving little by little, that is, balancing this, this, this. Like when you are a student, you have to spend more time on your studies. "No, no, Daddy. I want to be spiritual." You don't even know what is spiritual. It only means you are running away from your education. That is not permitted. No running away from life. Balance does not mean running away from life. That is the act of cowardice. So in childhood – little this, little this. When we are youths we have to spend more towards this, for education, but we cannot forget the other side. When we go towards this side, restore the balance.

In marriage again, the pleasures of marriage, of course; but if you go into seclusion like Shantanu and Ganga until eight children had been born and seven killed by Ganga herself – which means approximately, let us say, twenty years he did not appear outside his palace. His prime minister was complaining, his defence minister was complaining, "We don't see the Maharaja at all." You can't go into seclusion to enjoy marriage. In India that is why everything is public. Because there is this openness that you are a part of society, society has a right to know what is happening, what you are doing, because what you are doing will affect society inevitably. So in India we don't have this idea of privacy that is so important in the West. Here, on the contrary, we have the idea of, shall we say, holiness. Because I have heard Europeans argue with me, "What is the difference between your attitude and our attitude?" I say, "Certain things are not done in public in the Eastern cultures, not because they are secret or dirty, but because they are holy." That means also, you know, *ipso facto*, doing it at night, not in the day. You find all this in our Shastras in a different emphasis, as if, if you do it by day it is a sin, et cetera. But the idea is, that which must be sacred must not be seen. Therefore in Western tradition also you have the veils, seven veils. One by one you throw them off. A veil is something which is, shall we say, semi-transparent. There is a hint of what is happening, but you cannot see what is happening.

So our social structure is here to have this idea that certain facts of our spiritual life, physical life, our eating habits – not secret. Sacred. For instance we have this tradition that you should not eat when it is dark. Suppose when you are eating, suddenly lights go out, they will stop eating. It used to be in my grandmother's time. So you bring a lamp, no? Now the real fact is that if you eat when it is dark, you don't know what you are eating. There may be insects. In olden days we had no screens and curtains, we had the mud floors, there was everything at home. So when we understand these rules of personal life, social life, community life, we see there is a scientific basis to all these religious impositions which makes sense. Only thing is, we don't understand so we say, "This is all superstition."

Sahaj Marg says simple life, balanced life. Don't worry about light and dark. If there is darkness, you can create light in it. Isn't it? Do it for your personal self. You cannot light up the universe, at least now, but you can light up your home. There is a story that Vivekananda, in his sleep, radiated light and he could see so many things around him. And this is verifiable, if you are elevated to a certain extent, in your own experience. So do we see light? Do we require light to see things? I believe not. Not if you are an elevated spiritual person. There, there is no more light, there is no more darkness. What the Naasadiya Sukta says, "There was neither light nor darkness." We can ask how can there be neither light nor darkness. There was. And you can verify this in your personal experience, by spiritual growth and in the succeeding spiritual experiences that are available to you. There are states when it is dark for everybody but when you can see.

So unless you want to go deep into spiritual life and see that the sun is not the only source of light... the real source of light is here. The sun is not the only source of benevolence, or God is not the only source of benevolence, nor your family – it is here; the satisfaction does not come from outside, it comes from here. If I put my satisfaction and my contentment on fulfilment of desires, I am going to be eternally miserable because I will never have what I want, because every day my wants are changing. On such things automobile manufacturers, refrigerator manufacturers, the so-called consumer goods manufacturers, they survive. And they survive better than us. That is why you frantically change cars, change furniture, change this and that and the other. "Oh, this is more modern."

Now, what is the essence of living? Essence of living is not in comfort, is not in satisfaction. It is in a situation, a state of repose – repose, not in the French sense of rest, but where all my tendencies, my senses, are calm, in balance, and there is no perturbation in my mind, in my heart. And therefore such a man is sitting apparently doing nothing. There is a blissful, not exactly a smile, but something approaching a smile on his radiant face like the face of the Buddha, for instance. And we wonder how this is possible. It is possible because he has made his inside the source of his happiness, the source of his health, the source of all the light that he needs, the source, in fact, of all the benevolence that he wants – even the source of that power which will give him the final purushartha of moksha. Without this, nothing outside. I mean, especially in India, you have thousands and thousands of gods and goddesses. Who is coming to our help? Does the fact that the god is there give us any, shall we say, guarantee that we are going to happy, healthy, wealthy and wise? Not at all. On the streets, in our homes, even in the richest homes, the poorest homes, the story of the misery is the same. No health, no wealth, no happiness. In the poor, because they really don't have; in the rich, because having, they want more. As Babuji said, "A poor man wants money, he wants to be rich. Rich man wants to be richer. And the richer person wants to be the richest." No satisfaction. So ten crores, fifty crores, hundred crores, thousand crores; then, like Reliance, 50,000 crores. What are they doing with the 50,000 crores?

So life is not in acquisition, it is in becoming. Meditation is not to acquire, not even to acquire health, wealth, satisfaction. If you live correctly, you will have health. You must eat properly, drink properly. That is the basic thing, basic wisdom of life. Meditation is not supposed to make you healthy. Meditation is supposed to balance you, regulate you. Wisdom, also, meditation does not give. Apparently, you see, the gurus are wise. But are they wise? Babuji I don't think was wise. He had access to a certain source of, shall we say, universal wisdom, divine wisdom. And when he did that, he got. I don't think Babuji was a wise man. If he was not a fool, he could not be wise also, because the duality is there. But he was able to tap into that source of the divine wisdom, divine energy. When he wanted to walk, he would get up and walk. Otherwise he was lying down listless, like this – almost, as we would think, about to fall sick forever. But suppose he suddenly remembered work; in no time at all he was okay and he said, "I am going." "Where?" "I am going to work." "Where?" "Where the work is."

I know when he was coming to Denmark, I think it was in 1980, I am not sure, he arrived from Shahjahanpur by road in midsummer. You know the heat of North India, forty-eight degrees, fifty degrees through Bareilly, through Moradabad, through all those regions, and he was practically dead when he arrived in Delhi. He was really sick. The doctors were called and his blood pressure, it was ridiculous, it was 80/46. The doctors could not believe it. But next morning, it was even worse. It was 42/18, which is unheard of, and he was still alive. The doctors said, "How are you alive?" He said, "Only my master keeps me alive. I don't know why." This was a Saturday morning and we had to leave on Monday evening for Denmark. In those days we had those SAS flights going directly to Frankfurt – Delhi, Frankfurt, Copenhagen. So I asked Babuji, "Should we cancel, or postpone, or what?" He said, "Why do you ask?" I said, "Your blood pressure, 42/18." He said, "How much should it be?" I said, "120/80." "120/80?" I said, "Yes." He said, "All right." This was Saturday morning. Monday evening we are to leave. Monday morning, the doctors come. Of course they were there all the time, they were all there on Sunday also. Monday morning it was exactly 120/80. And we left that evening for Denmark.

So you see, God gives us health, wealth, happiness, wisdom even, to use for His purpose. It is not important that I am, like a *pahalwan* [wrestler] all the time going around raping women, robbing stores, what we call *goondas* [ruffians], it is not enough. They will reap all this later. All of this story of Babuji Maharaj I am telling you only to prove to you that when I need it for my spiritual work, I will have it. Why? Because the source of all benevolence, the eternal source, is waiting to give me that which I need.

Second story: When we were about to build the Shahjahanpur Ashram, the budget was, I think, eleven lakhs or eight lakhs. We had fifty thousand rupees in the bank. I said, "Babuji." He said, "What?" I said, "Fifty thousand and seven lakhs, big gap." He said, "How much?" I said, "Six and a half lakhs." He said, "*Sadhe chcheh lakh?* [Six and a half lakhs?]" I said, "Yes." He said, "I will pray." Eventually we built it for thirty lakhs. We never had any problem, though he was always worried. I think in his case, as it should be in the case of all of us, when we worry, we are really communicating our internal concern to Him, to the Almighty, all-powerful, all-blessing, the source of everything. "O Master, I need. This is your work I am doing." They don't ask questions. They depend on you because they know you have done what is right. So the purse is opened. You may need six lakhs; you may get sixty lakhs, or you may get six hundred lakhs. The secret is you get much more than you need. But you cannot say, "This is for myself." That is the problem. When you need power, power comes; when you need money, money comes; when you need rest, rest he will give you, but His work will be done.

I remember I was in Denmark once, and I had been giving about twenty-four sittings every day and he called me. He said, "Tomorrow there is no work for you." I said, "Why?" He said, "Your brain is heavy. I feel that there is heaviness in your brain because you are doing too much." I said, "But Babuji, I have already bookings for tomorrow." He said, "All right, day after tomorrow, no work." I think some of the Danes from those days will remember this. So that day after tomorrow came and we were both relaxed, lying on the bed drinking orange juice, making stories, making everybody laugh, but no work. Rest came. Now if I had told him, "I am tired, Babuji. I feel heaviness in my head," he would have been shocked.

So here is a situation, a work situation, where a disciple cannot go to the master and say, "I am tired." The master is all-knowing. For me, my master is all-knowing. For him, his master is all-knowing. He says, "Rest," rest. He says, "You are hungry," eat. I mean, hundreds of instances I can give you. I went to Shahjahanpur, I didn't carry a bed. It was midwinter and I was lying on a floor like this with the same carpet, shivering. At 10.30 at night he brought a blanket and covered me with it. How did he know? I mean, we were a hundred people sleeping there. Why, from his bedroom which was somewhere else, he could see Parthasarathi is shivering and brought a blanket? On another occasion I had no food because, you know, I am a little sensitive. I don't go and sit down and ask for food. They ignored me, I ignored the food. And I was in bed. He came and told me, "You had no food today. You have not eaten." I said, "No, no. I am not hungry." He gave me an apple. He said, "Eat it." I asked for a knife to cut it so that I can give everybody. He said, "No, it is for you." Now nobody can accuse me of selfishness. Then he told me a great secret. He said, "When the guru gives you something, it is always only for yourself. He knows how to distribute. You are not his agent." So when we give prasad, often these Westerners, in a mistaken sense of being selfless and unselfish, they immediately distribute – not permitted in spiritual law. So when we have this sort of system, when we have this sort of guru who, at will, can get what he wants if he wants it and if it is necessary – otherwise he is like a dog sleeping under the shade of a tree, blissfully content to be at its master's feet. This is the spiritual truth of the spiritual life.

We are not meant to be active except when we are to be active. We are not meant to rest when we must not rest. We are not meant to have for ourselves. We are always to work selflessly with the idea of taking instructions, fulfilling those instructions and letting whatever has to happen, happen to what we have done. We cannot say, "Oh, this ashram, I built. How can I see it destroyed?" None of my business. It is my business to build according to his instructions. If it does not have to exist, that is his business. This is the idea of *nishkama karma* – work without aspiring to the fruit of our efforts. No rewards. There are in fact no rewards and punishments in spiritual life. I mean, the fact that you get what you need to do his work, is that not a reward? Suppose he says, "Build an ashram," and he doesn't send you money or people, what will you do? So if you look at it that way, when you do his work properly with devotion, that, "It is *my* work," everything comes to you. Then there is no such thing as reward which I can segregate for myself. "This is my reward for..." You see, there is no such thing.

So spiritual life is a life of fulfilment – not for the sake of the self, full of work; not for the sake of the self, full of achievement; not for your pride, or what shall we say, embellishing your own ego. And final states of *purushartha* is a consequence of all this way of life. So those who say, "I am praying for liberation," they are foolish. You cannot get liberation by meditation alone. Therefore we have the famous examples of many rishis who worshipped, prayed and did meditation for twenty-five thousand years. Therefore we have the example of the story of Narada who was going to the *devaloka* [the abode of the gods] to see God, and the man who was meditating, a rishi, asked Narada, "Where are you going?" He said, "I am going to heaven to see the Lord." He said, "Please, how long do I have to meditate? Have I to take any more lives? Will you ask Him and tell me?" Narada said yes. Then Narada met a fellow who was almost mad, dancing in ecstasy. He said, "Narada, please find out how many lives I have to live." He said yes. When he came back the rishi asked, "What about my answer?" He said, "You have to have two more lives." And the rishi was in despair; he was almost crazy with sadness and anger. He said, "I have been doing so much, and two more lives? God is unjust." Usual story, all injustice is God, all cruelty is with God, all misery is from God. Then Narada smiles and goes on and meets this nearly mad fellow who dances around and says, "Narada, have you got my answer?" He says, "Yes, my son. As many leaves as there are in this tamarind tree." He says, "That is all?" and he is dancing blissfully. And a voice comes and says, "You are liberated now."

It was in the attitude. Here is a man meditating, expecting every moment to be liberated. So what is he meditating upon? Obviously not on what he should be meditating, but on, "When will I be released?" Like a man in a prison, "When will I be released?" Why do you think this life is a prison? I don't think it is a prison. If you are desire-bound, slave of your desires, it is a prison. Your desires are your prison. If you are happy and you work for a master, no sense of inability comes before you. "Can you do this?" "Yes, Babuji." "How can you do it?" "You will make it possible." "Aha!" He smiles and says, "Yes, go ahead."

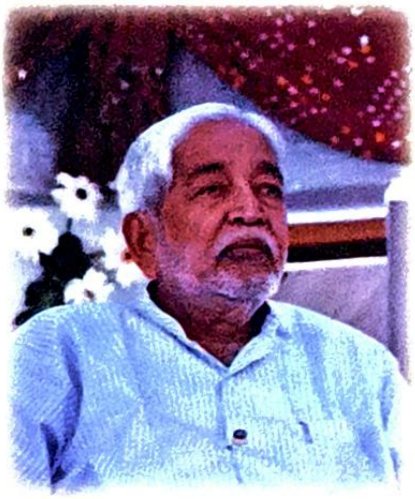
So this is the attitude I want abhyasis to develop. I have said repeatedly, meditation is in obedience to Master's wishes. By itself it guarantees nothing. You may meditate twenty-four hours a day, all your life, you may get nothing. But one moment of true exposure to the immensity, the magnificence, the nobility, the divinity of *that* – one moment of exposure and your future is achieved now, in the present. In the Hindu tradition they say that in the darkest night, if there is a flash of lightning, the whole scenery is shown, visible. Isn't it?

So I hope all of you will remember this and do your sadhana in the right way, with the right aspiration. And as for me, as I was saying somewhere, serve to deserve. All this is an aspect of service. When you serve someone higher than yourself, selflessly, you get all that is His. As Babuji said, "I never thought that what was my master's was not also mine." He believed in giving these twisted sentences which were a little difficult to make out. Like Bilbo Baggins giving a speech, the final sentences were very confusing. I think most of the hobbits were thinking over what he really meant. Babuji was like that. "I never thought that what was my master's was not also mine." What did he mean? Don't think. Like every child knows everything that their parents have is also theirs. Why don't we think that my master's wealth is mine? Spiritual wealth, material wealth, we cannot distinguish between these wealths. It is a fool who distinguishes between spiritual wealth and material wealth. What is it that we get when we eat? Of course we eat material food, but unless it is digested and the essence taken out of it for the body, it's nothing. That is why you have a digestive apparatus, and when it fails, you have all the problems. You have endocrinologists, dieticians, gastroenterologists. So, converting material into spiritual through a process – digestion for food, circulation for blood, oxygenation through the lungs, et cetera, et cetera. And in spirituality the process of converting all that we know and do into spirituality is through the act of meditation. So meditation is merely a process, not an end in itself.

So I think I have told you enough to give you a glimpse into what spiritual life must be, what you have to do to achieve it. The only way that I have known is through service. All this talk of loving the master and devotion and all is blah, blah, because when we don't know what is love, how can we love someone? I should say, to describe Babuji in a different way, "Love is not what we think it is."

Thank you.

HeartSpeak 2002 Volume II



> *"I pray that my Master will give you all the courage to transcend language, religion, caste, nationality, every other thing that separates a human being from a human being. May he bless you with this courage. Because – you know the word audacious is relevant here – we must have audacity to penetrate through all these barriers imposed upon us by society, by culture, by religion, break free of these bonds once and for all, and say, 'I am free.' "*
>
> **– P. Rajagopalachari**

HeartSpeak 2002 Volume II contains the talks and discourses given by Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari during the second half of 2002, starting with his 75th birth anniversary in Chennai in July. These talks were all given in southern India, in various parts of Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh. They cover topics both worldly and spiritual, including tolerance, harmony, brotherhood and human integration, as well as truthfulness, duty, obedience, seriousness of purpose in spirituality and the need for a guru. They are also enriched with stories, which help to illustrate spiritual philosophy and values to seekers from all backgrounds and cultures. These talks provide insight and guidance to all seekers of the Divine.

Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari was born in India in 1927, and is known to many as a truly universal human being, having transcended cultural and religious boundaries and providing guidance to students from all countries and backgrounds. He was raised in the rich spiritual heritage of the East and extensively educated in the Western tradition. As the spiritual head and president of the Shri Ram Chandra Mission, he has travelled widely over the last thirty years, offering his services and spiritual guidance to seekers.

Sahaj Marg means natural path, and is a practical, spiritual system based on inner experience through meditation. The goal of the practice is union with God or Self. This modern-day form of raja yoga is practised daily by people around the world. The simple practice is easily integrated into a busy lifestyle, bringing balance, joy and spiritual growth.

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